



## INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification 7 :

C12N 15/45, A61K 39/155, 48/00

A2

(11) International Publication Number:

WO 00/53767

(43) International Publication Date: 14 September 2000 (14.09.00)

(21) International Application Number: PCT/CA00/00227

(22) International Filing Date: 3 March 2000 (03.03.00)

(30) Priority Data:

09/262,927

5 March 1999 (05.03.99)

US

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): CONNAUGHT LABORATORIES LIMITED [CA/CA]; 1755 Steeles Avenue West, Toronto, Ontario M2R 3T4 (CA).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): LI, Xiaomao [CA/CA]; 77 Harbour Square, Apartment 3701, Toronto, Ontario M5J 2S2 (CA). EWASYSHYN, Mary, E. [CA/CA]; Apartment 1506, 120 Torredale Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M2R 3N7 (CA). SAMBHARA, Suryaprakash [CA/CA]; 50 Harness Circle, Markham, Ontario L3S 1Y1 (CA). KLEIN, Michel, H. [CA/CA]; 16 Munro Boulevard, Willowdale, Ontario M2P 1B9 (CA).

(74) Agent: STEWART, Michael, I.; Sim &amp; McBurney, 6th floor, 330 University Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1R7 (CA).

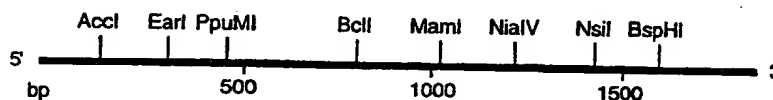
(81) Designated States: AE, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published

Without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report.

(54) Title: NUCLEIC ACID RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS VACCINES

## RESTRICTION MAP OF THE RSV F GENE



## (57) Abstract

Non-replicating vectors containing a nucleotide sequence coding for an F protein of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and a promoter for such sequence, preferably a cytomegalovirus promoter, are described for *in vivo* immunization. The nucleotide sequence encoding the RSV F protein lacks a sequence encoding the homologous signal peptide but possesses a heterologous signal peptide enhancing RSV F protein expression. Such non-replicating vectors, including plasmids, also may contain a further nucleotide sequence located adjacent to the RSV F protein encoding sequence to enhance the immunoprotective ability of the RSV F protein when expressed *in vivo*. Such non-replicating vectors may be used to immunize a host against disease caused by infection with RSV, including a human host, by administration thereto, and may be formulated as immunogenic compositions with pharmaceutically-acceptable carriers for such purpose. Such vectors also may be used to produce antibodies for detection of RSV infection in a sample.

**FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY**

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AL	Albania	ES	Spain	LS	Lesotho	SI	Slovenia
AM	Armenia	FI	Finland	LT	Lithuania	SK	Slovakia
AT	Austria	FR	France	LU	Luxembourg	SN	Senegal
AU	Australia	GA	Gabon	LV	Latvia	SZ	Swaziland
AZ	Azerbaijan	GB	United Kingdom	MC	Monaco	TD	Chad
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina	GE	Georgia	MD	Republic of Moldova	TG	Togo
BB	Barbados	GH	Ghana	MG	Madagascar	TJ	Tajikistan
BE	Belgium	GN	Guinea	MK	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	TM	Turkmenistan
BF	Burkina Faso	GR	Greece	ML	Mali	TR	Turkey
BG	Bulgaria	HU	Hungary	MN	Mongolia	TT	Trinidad and Tobago
BJ	Benin	IE	Ireland	MR	Mauritania	UA	Ukraine
BR	Brazil	IL	Israel	MW	Malawi	UG	Uganda
BY	Belarus	IS	Iceland	MX	Mexico	US	United States of America
CA	Canada	IT	Italy	NE	Niger	UZ	Uzbekistan
CF	Central African Republic	JP	Japan	NL	Netherlands	VN	Viet Nam
CG	Congo	KE	Kenya	NO	Norway	YU	Yugoslavia
CH	Switzerland	KG	Kyrgyzstan	NZ	New Zealand	ZW	Zimbabwe
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	PL	Poland		
CM	Cameroon	KR	Republic of Korea	PT	Portugal		
CN	China	KZ	Kazakhstan	RO	Romania		
CU	Cuba	LC	Saint Lucia	RU	Russian Federation		
CZ	Czech Republic	LI	Liechtenstein	SD	Sudan		
DE	Germany	LK	Sri Lanka	SE	Sweden		
DK	Denmark	LR	Liberia	SG	Singapore		
EE	Estonia						

TITLE OF INVENTIONNUCLEIC ACID RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS VACCINESFIELD OF INVENTION

5 The present invention is related to the field of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccines and is particularly concerned with vaccines comprising nucleic acid sequences encoding the fusion (F) protein of RSV.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

10 Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), a negative-strand RNA virus belonging to the *Paramyxoviridae* family of viruses, is the major viral pathogen responsible for bronchiolitis and pneumonia in infants and young children (ref. 1 - Throughout this application, various references are referred to in parenthesis to more fully describe the state of the art to which this invention pertains. Full bibliographic information for each citation is found at the end of the specification, immediately preceding the claims. The disclosures of these references are hereby incorporated by reference  
15 into the present disclosure). Acute respiratory tract infections caused by RSV result in approximately 90,000 hospitalizations and 4,500 deaths per year in the United States (ref. 2). Medical care costs due to RSV infection are greater than \$340 M annually in the United States alone (ref. 3). There is currently no licensed vaccine against RSV. The main approaches for developing an RSV vaccine have included  
20 inactivated virus, live-attenuated viruses and subunit vaccines.

The F protein of RSV is considered to be one of the most important protective antigens of the virus. There is a significant similarity (89% identity) in the amino acid sequences of the F proteins from RSV subgroups A and B (ref. 3) and anti-F antibodies can cross-neutralize viruses of both subgroups as well as  
25 protect immunized animals against infection with viruses from both subgroups (ref. 4). Furthermore, the F protein has been identified as a major target for RSV-specific cytotoxic T-lymphocytes in mice and humans (ref. 3 and ref. 5).

The use of RSV proteins as vaccines may have obstacles. Parenterally administered vaccine candidates have so far proven to be poorly immunogenic with  
30 regard to the induction of neutralizing antibodies in seronegative humans or chimpanzees. The serum antibody response induced by these antigens may be

further diminished in the presence of passively acquired antibodies, such as the transplacentally acquired maternal antibodies which most young infants possess. A subunit vaccine candidate for RSV consisting of purified fusion glycoprotein from RSV infected cell cultures and purified by immunoaffinity or ion-exchange chromatography has been described (ref. 6). Parenteral immunization of seronegative or seropositive chimpanzees with this preparation was performed and three doses of 50  $\mu$ g were required in seronegative animals to induce an RSV serum neutralizing titre of approximately 1:50. Upon subsequent challenge of these animals with wild-type RSV, no effect of immunization on virus shedding or clinical disease could be detected in the upper respiratory tract. The effect of immunization with this vaccine on virus shedding in the lower respiratory tract was not investigated, although this is the site where the serum antibody induced by parenteral immunization may be expected to have its greatest effect. Safety and immunogenicity studies have been performed in a small number of seropositive individuals. The vaccine was found to be safe in seropositive children and in three seronegative children (all > 2.4 years of age). The effects of immunization on lower respiratory tract disease could not be determined because of the small number of children immunized. One immunizing dose in seropositive children induced a 4-fold increase in virus neutralizing antibody titres in 40 to 60% of the vaccinees. Thus, insufficient information is available from these small studies to evaluate the efficacy of this vaccine against RSV-induced disease. A further problem facing subunit RSV vaccines is the possibility that inoculation of seronegative subjects with immunogenic preparations might result in disease enhancement (sometimes referred to as immunopotential), similar to that seen in formalin inactivated RSV vaccines. In some studies, the immune response to immunization with RSV F protein or a synthetic RSV FG fusion protein resulted in a disease enhancement in rodents resembling that induced by a formalin-inactivated RSV vaccine. The association of immunization with disease enhancement using non-replicating antigens suggests caution in their use as vaccines in seronegative humans.

Live attenuated vaccines against disease caused by RSV may be promising for two main reasons. Firstly, infection by a live vaccine virus induces a balanced immune response comprising mucosal and serum antibodies and cytotoxic T-

lymphocytes. Secondly, infection of infants with live attenuated vaccine candidates or naturally acquired wild-type virus is not associated with enhanced disease upon subsequent natural reinfection. It will be challenging to produce live attenuated vaccines that are immunogenic for younger infants who possess maternal virus-neutralizing antibodies and yet are attenuated for seronegative infants greater than or equal to 6 months of age. Attenuated live virus vaccines also have the risks of residual virulence and genetic instability.

Injection of plasmid DNA containing sequences encoding a foreign protein has been shown to result in expression of the foreign protein and the induction of antibody and cytotoxic T-lymphocyte responses to the antigen in a number of studies (see, for example, refs. 7, 8, 9). The use of plasmid DNA inoculation to express viral proteins for the purpose of immunization may offer several advantages over the strategies summarized above. Firstly, DNA encoding a viral antigen can be introduced in the presence of antibody to the virus itself, without loss of potency due to neutralization of virus by the antibodies. Secondly, the antigen expressed *in vivo* should exhibit a native conformation and, therefore, should induce an antibody response similar to that induced by the antigen present in the wild-type virus infection. In contrast, some processes used in purification of proteins can induce conformational changes which may result in the loss of immunogenicity of protective epitopes and possibly immunopotential. Thirdly, the expression of proteins from injected plasmid DNAs can be detected *in vivo* for a considerably longer period of time than that in virus-infected cells, and this has the theoretical advantage of prolonged cytotoxic T-cell induction and enhanced antibody responses. Fourthly, *in vivo* expression of antigen may provide protection without the need for an extrinsic adjuvant.

In WO 96/04095 published December 19, 1996 and US Patents Nos. 5,843,913, 5,880,104, 6,019,980 and 6,022,864, assigned to the assignee hereof and the disclosures of which is incorporated herein by reference, there is described the provision of non-replicating vectors, specifically plasmid vectors, and immunogenic compositions comprising the same, for administration to a host to generate an immune response to RSV. Such vectors comprise a first nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein or RSV F protein fragment that generates antibodies

and/or cytotoxic T-lymphocytes (CTLs) that specifically react with RSV F protein; a promoter sequence operatively coupled to the first nucleotide sequence for expression of the RSV F protein in the host, and a second nucleotide sequence located between the first nucleotide sequence and promoter sequence to enhance the immunoprotective ability of the RSV F protein when expressed *in vivo* from the vector in a host.

The ability to immunize against disease caused by RSV by administration of a DNA molecule encoding an RSV F protein was unknown before the invention described in the above-mentioned WO 96/04095. In particular, the efficacy of immunization against RSV induced disease using a gene encoding a secreted form of the RSV F protein was unknown. Infection with RSV leads to serious disease. It would be useful and desirable to provide isolated genes encoding RSV F protein and improved vectors for *in vivo* administration for use in immunogenic preparations, including vaccines, for protection against disease caused by RSV and for the generation of diagnostic reagents and kits. In particular, it would be desirable to provide improved vaccines that are immunogenic and protective in humans, including seronegative infants, that do not cause disease enhancement (immunopotential).

#### SUMMARY OF INVENTION

The present invention relates to a method of immunizing a host against disease caused by respiratory syncytial virus, to nucleic acid molecules used therein, and to diagnostic procedures utilizing the nucleic acid molecules. In particular, the present invention is directed towards the provision of improved nucleic acid respiratory syncytial virus vaccines.

In accordance with one aspect of the invention, there is provided an immunogenic composition for *in vivo* administration to a host for the generation in the host of a protective immune response to RSV F protein, comprising a vector which is non-replicating in the host to which it is administered, including a plasmid vector, comprising:

a nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein lacking an autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence and including, in its place, a sequence encoding a

heterologous signal peptide sequence which enhances the level of expression of the RSV F protein; and

a promoter sequence operatively coupled to the nucleotide sequence for expression of the RSV F protein.

5 The nucleotide sequence encoding the RSV F protein may be that which encodes an RSV F protein from which the transmembrane region is absent. The lack of expression of the transmembrane region results in a secreted form of the RSV F protein. The nucleotide sequence encoding the RSV F protein may include a portion encoding the mature RSV F protein.

10 One heterologous signal peptide which has been found useful in providing enhanced *in vivo* expression levels of RSV F protein is the signal peptide of Herpes Simplex Virus I (HSV I) gD. Such enhanced expression levels also lead to improved immunogenicity of the vector at the same dosage level as vectors having the autologous signal peptide sequence, as described in WO 96/04095 referred to above.

15 A vector encoding the RSV F protein and provided by this aspect of the invention may specifically be plasmid p82M35B, as seen in Figure 10.

The vector may contain a second nucleotide sequence to enhance the immunoprotective ability of the RSV F protein when expressed *in vivo* from the vector in a host. The second nucleotide sequence may comprise a pair of splice sites to prevent aberrant mRNA splicing, whereby substantially all transcribed mRNA encodes the RSV F protein. Such second nucleotide sequence may be located between the first nucleotide sequence and the promoter sequence. Such second nucleotide sequence may be that of rabbit  $\beta$ -globin intron II, as shown in Figure 8 (SEQ ID No: 5).

25 The promoter sequence employed in the vector may be any suitable promoter which provides expression of the RSV F protein in the host. The promoter sequence may be an immediate early cytomegalovirus (CMV) promoter.

Certain of the vectors provided herein may be used to immunize a host against RSV infection or disease by *in vivo* expression of RSV F protein following administration of the vectors in the form of immunogenic compositions.

30 In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, there is provided an immunogenic composition for *in vivo* administration to a host for the generation

in the host of a protective immune response to RSV F protein, comprising a non-replicating vector as provided herein and a pharmaceutically-acceptable carrier therefor.

5 In accordance with a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of immunizing a host against disease caused by infection with respiratory syncytial virus, which comprises administering to the host an effective amount an immunogenic composition provided herein.

The invention further extends to the vectors provided herein when used as an immunogen for immunizing a host against disease caused by infection with RSV. In addition, the invention extends to the use of the vectors provided herein in the manufacture of a medicament for immunizing a host against disease caused by RSV.

10 The present invention also includes a novel method of using a nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein lacking an autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence and including a heterologous signal peptide which enhances the level of expression of RSV F protein, which comprises:

15 isolating a gene encoding RSV F protein having an autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence;

substituting a nucleotide sequence encoding a heterologous signal peptide which enhances the level of expression of RSV F protein for the nucleotide sequence encoding the autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence to form the nucleotide sequence,

20 operatively linking the nucleotide sequence to at least one control sequence to produce a non-replicating vector, said control sequence directing expression of the RSV F protein when said vector is introduced into a host to produce an immune response to the RSV F protein, and

25 introducing the vector into the host.

The procedure provided in accordance with this aspect of the invention may further include the step of:

30 operatively linking the nucleotide sequence to an immunoprotection enhancing sequence to produce an enhanced immunoprotection by the RSV F protein in the host, preferably by introducing the immunoprotection enhancing sequence between the control sequence and the nucleotide sequence.



In addition, the present invention includes a method of producing a vaccine for protection of a host against disease caused by infection with respiratory syncytial virus, which comprises:

isolating a first nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein having an  
5 autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence;

substituting a nucleotide sequence encoding a heterologous signal peptide which enhances the level of expression of RSV F protein for the nucleotide sequence encoding the autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence to form a second nucleotide sequence,

10 operatively linking the second nucleotide sequence to at least one control sequence to produce a non-replicating vector, including a plasmid vector, the control sequence directing expression of the RSV F protein when introduced into a host to produce an immune response to the RSV F protein when expressed *in vivo* from the vector in a host, and

15 formulating the vector as a vaccine for *in vivo* administration.

The second nucleotide sequence further may be operatively linked to a third nucleotide sequence to enhance the immunoprotective ability of the RSV F protein when expressed *in vivo* from the vector in a host. The vector may be the plasmid vector p82M35B. The invention further includes a vaccine for administration to a  
20 host, including a human host, produced by this method as well as immunogenic compositions comprising an immunoeffective amount of the vectors described herein.

As noted previously, the vectors provided herein are useful in diagnostic applications. In a further aspect of the invention, therefore, there is provided a  
25 method of determining the presence of an RSV F protein in a sample, comprising the steps of:

- (a) immunizing a host with a non-replicating vector as provided herein to produce antibodies specific for the RSV F protein;
- (b) isolating the RSV F protein specific antibodies;
- 30 (c) contacting the sample with the isolated antibodies to produce complexes comprising any RSV F protein present in the sample and the RSV F protein- specific antibodies; and

- (d) determining production of the complexes.

The non-replicating vector employed to elicit the antibodies may be the plasmid vector p82M35B.

The invention also includes a diagnostic kit for detecting the presence of an  
5 RSV F protein in a sample, comprising:

- (a) a non-replicating vector as provided herein to produce antibodies specific for the RSV F protein;
- (b) isolation means to isolate said RSV F protein specific antibodies;
- (c) contacting means to contact the isolated RSV F specific antibodies  
10 with the sample to produce a complex comprising any RSV F protein present in the sample and RSV F protein specific antibodies; and
- (d) identifying means to determine production of the complex.

The present invention is further directed to a method for producing RSV F protein specific polyclonal antibodies comprising the use of the immunization  
15 method described herein, and further comprising the step of isolating the RSV F protein specific polyclonal antibodies from the immunized animal.

The present invention is also directed to a method for producing monoclonal antibodies specific for an F protein of RSV, comprising the steps of:

- (a) constructing a non-replicating vector as provided herein;
- 20 (b) administering the vector to at least one mouse to produce at least one immunized mouse;
- (c) removing B-lymphocytes from the at least one immunized mouse;
- (d) fusing the B-lymphocytes from the at least one immunized mouse with myeloma cells, thereby producing hybridomas;
- 25 (e) cloning the hybridomas;
- (f) selecting clones which produce anti-F protein antibody;
- (g) culturing the anti-F protein antibody-producing clones; and
- (h) isolating anti-F protein monoclonal antibodies.

In this application, the term "RSV F protein" is used to define (1) a full-  
30 length mature RSV F protein, such proteins having variations in their amino acid sequences including those naturally occurring in various strains of RSV, (2) a secreted form of RSV F protein lacking a transmembrane region, and (3) functional

analogs of the RSV F protein. In this application, a first protein is a "functional analog" of a second protein if the first protein is immunologically related to and/or has the same function as the second protein. The functional analog may be, for example, a fragment of the protein or a substitution, addition or deletion mutant thereof. Included are RSV F protein fragments that generate antibodies and/or CTLs that specifically react with RSV F protein.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

The present invention will be further understood from the following General Description and Examples with reference to the Figures in which:

10        Figure 1 illustrates a restriction map of the gene encoding the F protein of Respiratory Syncytial Virus;

         Figures 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D and 2E show the nucleotide sequence of the gene encoding the membrane attached form of the F protein of Respiratory Syncytial Virus having its autologous signal peptide (SP) (SEQ ID No: 1) as well as the amino  
15        acid sequence of the RSV F protein encoded thereby (SEQ ID No: 2);

         Figures 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D show the nucleotide sequence of the gene encoding the secreted form of the RSV F protein having its autologous signal peptide sequence (SP) and lacking the transmembrane region (SEQ ID No: 3) as well as the amino acid sequence of the truncated RSV F protein lacking the  
20        transmembrane region encoded thereby (SEQ ID No: 4);

         Figures 4A, 4B, 4C and 4D show the construction of plasmid pXL1 containing the gene encoding a secreted form of the RSV F protein lacking the transmembrane region;

         Figures 5A, 5B, 5C and 5D show the construction of plasmid pXL2  
25        containing a gene encoding a secreted form of the RSV F protein lacking the transmembrane region and containing the rabbit  $\beta$ -globin Intron II sequence;

         Figures 6A, 6B, 6C and 6D show the construction of plasmid pXL3 containing the gene encoding a full length membrane attached form of the RSV F protein;

30        Figure 7 shows the construction of plasmid pXL4 containing a gene encoding a membrane attached form of the RSV F protein and containing the rabbit  $\beta$ -globin Intron II sequence;

Figure 8 shows the nucleotide sequence for the rabbit  $\beta$ -globin Intron II sequence (SEQ ID No. 5);

Figure 9 shows the lung cytokine expression profile in DNA-immunized mice after RSV challenge;

5 Figure 10 is a schematic showing the assembly of plasmid p82M35B containing a gene encoding a secreted form of the RSV F protein lacking the transmembrane region, and containing the rabbit  $\beta$ -globin Intron II sequence and the signal peptide sequence HSV I gD;

Figure 11 shows the nucleotide sequence of plasmid VR-1012 (SEQ ID No: 10 6); and

Figure 12 shows DNA (SEQ ID No: 7) and derived amino acid (SEQ ID No: 8) sequences of the HSV I gD signal peptide sequence, synthesized as a synthetic oligopeptide.

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF INVENTION

15 As described above, the present invention relates generally to polynucleotide, including DNA, immunization to obtain protection against infection by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and to diagnostic procedures using particular vectors. In the present invention, several recombinant vectors were constructed to contain a nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein. Certain of the vectors 20 described herein also are described in the aforementioned WO 96/04095 and do not form part of this invention but the description of their preparation and use in immunization studies are included herein for completeness and comparison.

The nucleotide sequence of the full length RSV F gene with the sequence encoding the autologous signal peptide is shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID No: 1). 25 Certain constructs provided herein include the nucleotide sequence encoding the full-length RSV F (SEQ ID No: 2) protein while others include an RSV F gene modified by insertion of termination codons immediately upstream of the transmembrane coding region (see Figure 3, SEQ ID No: 3), to prevent expression of the transmembrane portion of the protein and to produce a secreted or truncated 30 RSV F protein lacking a transmembrane region (SEQ ID No. 4). In addition, certain constructs provided herein in accordance with the present invention include a nucleic acid sequence encoding a heterologous signal peptide sequence rather than

the native signal peptide sequence to provide for enhanced protein expression and increased immunogenicity. Specifically, the signal peptide sequence for HSV I gD is employed for such purpose in the preferred embodiment. However, other heterologous signal peptides may be employed, such as that of human tissue plasminogen activator (TPA).

The nucleotide sequence encoding the RSV F protein is operatively coupled to a promoter sequence for expression of the encoded RSV F protein. The promoter sequence may be the immediately early cytomegalovirus (CMV) promoter. This promoter is described in ref. 13. Any other convenient promoter may be used, including constitutive promoters, such as, Rous Sarcoma Virus LTRs, and inducible promoters, such as metallothionine promoter, and tissue specific promoters.

The vectors provided herein, when administered to an animal, effect *in vivo* RSV F protein expression, as demonstrated by an antibody response in the animal to which it is administered. Such antibodies may be used herein in the detection of RSV protein in a sample, as described in more detail below. When the encoded RSV F protein is in the form of an RSV F protein from which the transmembrane region is absent, such as plasmid pXL1 (Figure 4), the administration of the vector conferred protection in mice and cotton rats to challenge by live RSV virus neutralizing antibody and cell mediated immune responses and an absence of immunopotential in immunized animals, as seen from the Examples below.

The recombinant vector also may include a second nucleotide sequence located adjacent the RSV F protein encoding nucleotide sequence to enhance the immunoprotective ability of the RSV F protein when expressed *in vivo* in a host. Such enhancement may be provided by increased *in vivo* expression, for example, by increased mRNA stability, enhanced transcription and/or translation. This additional sequence preferably is located between the promoter sequence and the RSV F protein-encoding sequence.

This enhancement sequence may comprise a pair of splice sites to prevent aberrant mRNA splicing during transcription and translation so that substantially all transcribed mRNA encodes an RSV F protein. Specifically, the rabbit  $\beta$ -globin Intron II sequence shown in Figure 7 (SEQ ID No: 5) may provide such splice sites, as also described in ref. 15.

The construct containing the Intron II sequence, CMV promoter and nucleotide sequence coding for the truncated RSV F protein lacking a transmembrane region, i.e. plasmid pXL2 (Figure 5), induced complete protection in mice against challenge with live RSV, as seen in the Examples below. In addition, the construct containing the Intron II sequence, CMV promoter and nucleotide sequence coding for the full-length RSV F protein, i.e. plasmid pXL4 (Figure 7), also conferred protection in mice to challenge with live RSV, as seen from the Examples below. Plasmids pXL1, pXL2, pXL3 and pXL4 all contain the autologous signal peptide sequence and are constructed in accordance with the aforementioned WO 96/04095.

The construct containing the Intron II sequence, CMV promoter, HSV I gD signal peptide peptide encoding sequence and nucleotide sequence coding for the truncated RSV F protein lacking a transmembrane region, i.e. plasmid p82M35B (Figure 10), in accordance with the invention, induced complete protection in the absence of cardiotoxin pretreatment under conditions where pretreatment with cardiotoxin was required for pXL2 to confer complete protection, as seen from the Examples below.

The vector provided herein may also comprise a third nucleotide sequence encoding a further antigen from RSV, an antigen from at least one other pathogen or at least one immunomodulating agent, such as cytokine. Such vector may contain said third nucleotide sequence in a chimeric or a bicistronic structure. Alternatively, vectors containing the third nucleotide sequence may be separately constructed and coadministered to a host, with the nucleic acid molecule provided herein.

It is clearly apparent to one skilled in the art, that the various embodiments of the present invention have many applications in the fields of vaccination, diagnosis and treatment of RSV infections. A further non-limiting discussion of such uses is further presented below.

#### **1. Vaccine Preparation and Use**

Immunogenic compositions, suitable to be used as vaccines, may be prepared from the RSV F genes and vectors as disclosed herein. The vaccine elicits an immune response in a subject which includes the production of anti-F antibodies. Immunogenic compositions, including vaccines, containing the nucleic acid may be

prepared as injectables, in physiologically-acceptable liquid solutions or emulsions for polynucleotide administration. The nucleic acid may be associated with liposomes, such as lecithin liposomes or other liposomes known in the art, as a nucleic acid liposome (for example, as described in WO 9324640, ref. 17) or the nucleic acid may be associated with an adjuvant, as described in more detail below. Liposomes comprising cationic lipids interact spontaneously and rapidly with polyanions such as DNA and RNA, resulting in liposome/nucleic acid complexes that capture up to 100% of the polynucleotide. In addition, the polycationic complexes fuse with cell membranes, resulting in an intracellular delivery of polynucleotide that bypasses the degradative enzymes of the lysosomal compartment. Published PCT application WO 94/27435 describes compositions for genetic immunization comprising cationic lipids and polynucleotides. Agents which assist in the cellular uptake of nucleic acid, such as calcium ions, viral proteins and other transfection facilitating agents, may advantageously be used.

Polynucleotide immunogenic preparations may also be formulated as microcapsules, including biodegradable time-release particles. Thus, U.S. Patent 5,151,264 describes a particulate carrier of a phospholipid/glycolipid/polysaccharide nature that has been termed Bio Vecteurs Supra Moléculaires (BVSM). The particulate carriers are intended to transport a variety of molecules having biological activity in one of the layers thereof.

U.S. Patent 5,075,109 describes encapsulation of the antigens trinitrophenylated keyhole limpet hemocyanin and staphylococcal enterotoxin B in 50:50 poly (DL-lactideco-glycolide). Other polymers for encapsulation are suggested, such as poly(glycolide), poly(DL-lactide-co-glycolide), copolyoxalates, polycaprolactone, poly(lactide-co-caprolactone), poly(esteramides), polyorthoesters and poly(8-hydroxybutyric acid), and polyanhydrides.

Published PCT application WO 91/06282 describes a delivery vehicle comprising a plurality of bioadhesive microspheres and antigens. The microspheres being of starch, gelatin, dextran, collagen or albumin. This delivery vehicle is particularly intended for the uptake of vaccine across the nasal mucosa. The delivery vehicle may additionally contain an absorption enhancer.

The RSV F genes and vectors may be mixed with pharmaceutically acceptable excipients which are compatible therewith. Such excipients may include, water, saline, dextrose, glycerol, ethanol, and combinations thereof. The immunogenic compositions and vaccines may further contain auxiliary substances, such as wetting or emulsifying agents, pH buffering agents, or adjuvants to enhance the effectiveness thereof. Immunogenic compositions and vaccines may be administered parenterally, by injection subcutaneously, intravenously, intradermally or intramuscularly, possibly following pretreatment of the injection site with a local anesthetic. Alternatively, the immunogenic compositions formed according to the present invention, may be formulated and delivered in a manner to evoke an immune response at mucosal surfaces. Thus, the immunogenic composition may be administered to mucosal surfaces by, for example, the nasal or oral (intra-gastric) routes. Alternatively, other modes of administration including suppositories and oral formulations may be desirable. For suppositories, binders and carriers may include, for example, polyalkalene glycols or triglycerides. Oral formulations may include normally employed excipients, such as, for example, pharmaceutical grades of saccharine, cellulose and magnesium carbonate.

The immunogenic preparations and vaccines are administered in a manner compatible with the dosage formulation, and in such amount as will be therapeutically effective, protective and immunogenic. The quantity to be administered depends on the subject to be treated, including, for example, the capacity of the individual's immune system to synthesize the RSV F protein and antibodies thereto, and if needed, to produce a cell-mediated immune response. Precise amounts of active ingredient required to be administered depend on the judgement of the practitioner. However, suitable dosage ranges are readily determinable by one skilled in the art and may be of the order of about 1  $\mu$ g to about 1 mg of the RSV F genes and vectors. Suitable regimes for initial administration and booster doses are also variable, but may include an initial administration followed by subsequent administrations. The dosage may also depend on the route of administration and will vary according to the size of the host. A vaccine which protects against only one pathogen is a monovalent vaccine. Vaccines which contain antigenic material of several pathogens are combined vaccines and also



belong to the present invention. Such combined vaccines contain, for example, material from various pathogens or from various strains of the same pathogen, or from combinations of various pathogens.

Immunogenicity can be significantly improved if the vectors are co-administered with adjuvants, commonly used as 0.05 to 0.1 percent solution in phosphate-buffered saline. Adjuvants enhance the immunogenicity of an antigen but are not necessarily immunogenic themselves. Adjuvants may act by retaining the antigen locally near the site of administration to produce a depot effect facilitating a slow, sustained release of antigen to cells of the immune system. Adjuvants can also attract cells of the immune system to an antigen depot and stimulate such cells to elicit immune responses.

Immunostimulatory agents or adjuvants have been used for many years to improve the host immune responses to, for example, vaccines. Thus, adjuvants have been identified that enhance the immune response to antigens. Some of these adjuvants are toxic, however, and can cause undesirable side-effects, making them unsuitable for use in humans and many animals. Indeed, only aluminum hydroxide and aluminum phosphate (collectively commonly referred to as alum) are routinely used as adjuvants in human and veterinary vaccines.

A wide range of extrinsic adjuvants and other immunomodulating material can provoke potent immune responses to antigens. These include saponins complexed to membrane protein antigens to produce immune stimulating complexes (ISCOMS), pluronic polymers with mineral oil, killed mycobacteria in mineral oil, Freund's complete adjuvant, bacterial products, such as muramyl dipeptide (MDP) and lipopolysaccharide (LPS), as well as monophoryl lipid A, QS 21 and polyphosphazene.

In particular embodiments of the present invention, the vector comprising a first nucleotide sequence encoding an F protein of RSV may be delivered in conjunction with a targeting molecule to target the vector to selected cells including cells of the immune system.

The polynucleotide may be delivered to the host by a variety of procedures, for example, Tang et al. (ref. 10) disclosed that introduction of gold microprojectiles coated with DNA encoding bovine growth hormone (BGH) into the skin of mice

resulted in production of anti-BGH antibodies in the mice, while Furth et al. (ref. 11) showed that a jet injector could be used to transfect skin, muscle, fat and mammary tissues of living animals.

## 2. Immunoassays

5 The RSV F genes and vectors of the present invention are useful as immunogens for the generation of anti-F antibodies for use in immunoassays, including enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays (ELISA), RIAs and other non-enzyme linked antibody binding assays or procedures known in the art. In ELISA assays, the vector first is administered to a host to generate antibodies specific to the  
10 RSV F protein. These RSV F-specific antibodies are immobilized onto a selected surface, for example, a surface capable of binding the antibodies, such as the wells of a polystyrene microtiter plate. After washing to remove incompletely adsorbed antibodies, a nonspecific protein such as a solution of bovine serum albumin (BSA) that is known to be antigenically neutral with regard to the test sample may be  
15 bound to the selected surface. This allows for blocking of nonspecific adsorption sites on the immobilizing surface and thus reduces the background caused by nonspecific bindings of antisera onto the surface.

The immobilizing surface is then contacted with a sample, such as clinical or biological materials, to be tested in a manner conducive to immune complex  
20 (antigen/antibody) formation. This procedure may include diluting the sample with diluents, such as solutions of BSA, bovine gamma globulin (BGG) and/or phosphate buffered saline (PBS)/Tween. The sample is then allowed to incubate for from about 2 to 4 hours, at temperatures such as of the order of about 20° to 37°C. Following incubation, the sample-contacted surface is washed to remove non-  
25 immunocomplexed material. The washing procedure may include washing with a solution, such as PBS/Tween or a borate buffer. Following formation of specific immunocomplexes between the test sample and the bound RSV F specific antibodies, and subsequent washing, the occurrence, and even amount, of immunocomplex formation may be determined.

30

## BIOLOGICAL MATERIALS

Certain plasmids that contain the gene encoding RSV F protein and referred to herein have been deposited with the America Type Culture Collection (ATCC)

located at 10801 University Blvd., Manassas, VA 20110-2209, U.S.A., pursuant to the Budapest Treaty and prior to the filing of this application. Samples of the deposited plasmids will become available to the public upon grant of a patent based upon this or a related United States patent application and all restrictions on access to the deposits will be removed at that time. The deposits will be replaced if the Depository is unable to dispense viable samples. The invention described and claimed herein is not to be limited in scope by plasmids deposited, since the deposited embodiment is intended only as an illustration of the invention. Any equivalent or similar plasmids that encode similar or equivalent antigens as described in this application are within the scope of the invention.

<u>Plasmid</u>	<u>ATCC Designation</u>	<u>Date Deposited</u>
pXL1	97167	May 30, 1995
pXL2	97168	May 30, 1995
pXL3	97169	May 30, 1995
pXL4	97170	May 30, 1995
p82M35B	203790	February 23, 1999

#### EXAMPLES

The above disclosure generally describes the present invention. A more complete understanding can be obtained by reference to the following specific Examples. These Examples are described solely for purposes of illustration and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention. Changes in form and substitution of equivalents are contemplated as circumstances may suggest or render expedient. Although specific terms have been employed herein, such terms are intended in a descriptive sense and not for purposes of limitations.

Methods of molecular genetics, protein biochemistry, and immunology used but not explicitly described in this disclosure and these Examples are amply reported in the scientific literature and are well within the ability of those skilled in the art.

#### Example 1

This Example describes the construction of vectors containing the RSV F gene.

Figure 1 shows a restriction map of the gene encoding the F protein of Respiratory Syncytial Virus and Figure 2 shows the nucleotide sequence of the gene

encoding the full-length RSV F protein (SEQ ID No: 1) and the deduced amino acid sequence (SEQ ID No: 2). Figure 3 shows the gene encoding the secreted RSV F protein (SEQ ID No: 3) and the deduced amino acid sequence (SEQ ID No: 4).

A set of four plasmid DNA constructs were made (as shown schematically in  
5 Figures 4 to 7) in which cDNA encoding the RSV-F was subcloned downstream of the immediate-early promoter, enhancer and intron A sequences of human cytomegalovirus (CMV) and upstream of the bovine growth hormone (BGH) poly-A site. The 1.6 Kb Sspl-PstI fragment containing the promoter, enhancer and intron A sequences of CMV Towne strain were initially derived from plasmid pRL43a  
10 obtained from Dr. G.S. Hayward of Johns Hopkins University (ref. 20) and subcloned between *EcoRV* and *PstI* sites of pBluescript 11 SK +/- (Stratagene). For the construction of plasmids expressing the secretory form of the F protein (pXL1 and pXL2 in Figs. 4 and 5), the 1.6 Kb *EcoRI*-*BamHI* fragment containing the truncated form of the F cDNA originally cloned from a clinical isolate belonging to  
15 subgroup A was excised from pRSVF (ref. 18 and WO 93/14207) and subcloned between *EcoRI* and *BamHI* sites of pSG5 (Stratagene, ref. 14). Either the 1.6 kb *EcoRI*-*BamHI* fragment or the 2.2 kb *ClaI*-*BamHI* fragment was then excised from the pSG5 construct, filled-in with Klenow and subcloned at the *SmaI* site of the pBluescript II SK +/- construct containing the promoter and intron A sequences. The  
20 0.6 kb *ClaI*-*EcoRI* fragment derived from pSG5 contained the intron II sequences from rabbit  $\beta$ -globin. Subsequently, the plasmids were digested with *HindIII*, filled-in with Klenow, and digested with *XbaI* to yield either a 3.2 or a 3.8 Kb fragment. These fragments were used to replace the 0.8 kb *NruI*-*XbaI* fragment containing the CMV promoter in pRc/CMV (Invitrogen), resulting in the final pXL1 and pXL2  
25 constructs, respectively.

For the construction of plasmids expressing the full-length F protein (pXL3 and pXL4 - Figs. 6 and 7), the full length RSV F cDNA was excised as a 1.9 kb *EcoRI* fragment from a recombinant pBluescript M13-SK (Stratagene) containing the insert (ref. 18 and WO 93/14207) and subcloned at the *EcoRI* site of pSG5  
30 (Stratagene). Either the 1.9 Kb *EcoRI* fragment or the 2.5 Kb *ClaI*-*BamHI* fragment was then excised from the pSG5 construct, filled-in with Klenow and subcloned at the *SmaI* site of the pBluescript II SK +/- construct containing the promoter and

intron A sequences. The rest of the construction for pXL3 and pXL4 was identical to that for pXL1 and pXL2, as described above. Therefore, except for the CMV promoter and intron A sequences, the rest of the vector components in pXL1-4 were derived from plasmid pRc/CMV. Plasmids pXL1 and pXL2 were made to express a truncated/secretory form of the F protein which carried stop codons resulting in a C-terminal deletion of 48 amino acids including the transmembrane (TM) and the C-terminal cytosolic tail as compared to the intact molecule. In contrast, pXL3 and pXL4 were made to express the intact membrane-attached form of the RSV F molecule containing the TM and the cytosolic C-terminal tail. The rationale for the presence of the intron II sequences in pXL2 and pXL4 was that this intron was reported to mediate the correct splicing of RNAs. Since mRNA for the RSV-F has been suspected to have a tendency towards aberrant splicing, the presence of the intron II sequences might help to overcome this. All four plasmid constructs were confirmed by DNA sequencing analysis. Plasmids pXL1, pXL2, pXL3 and pXL4 all contain the autologous signal peptide sequence and are constructed in accordance with the aforementioned WO 96/04095.

Plasmid DNA was purified using plasmid mega kits from Qiagen (Chatsworth, CA, USA) according to the manufacturer's instructions.

#### Example 2

This Example describes the immunization of mice. Mice are susceptible to infection by RSV as described in ref. 16.

For intramuscular (i.m) immunization, the anterior tibialis anterior muscles of groups of 9 BALB/c mice (male, 6-8 week old) (Jackson Lab., Bar Harbor, ME, USA) were bilaterally injected with 2 x 50  $\mu$ g (1  $\mu$ g/ $\mu$ L in PBS) of pXL1-4, respectively. Five days prior to DNA injection, the muscles were treated with 2 x 50  $\mu$ L (10  $\mu$ M in PBS) of cardiotoxin (Latoxan, France). Pretreatment of the muscles with cardiotoxin has been reported to increase DNA uptake and to enhance the subsequent immune responses by the intramuscular route (ref. 24). These animals were similarly boosted a month later. Mice in the control group were immunized with a placebo plasmid containing identical vector backbone sequences without the RSV F gene according to the same schedule. For intradermal (i.d.) immunization,

100 µg of pXL2 (2 µg/µL in PBS) were injected into the skin 1-2 cm distal from the tail base. The animals were similarly boosted a month later.

Seventy-five days after the second immunization, mice were challenged intranasally with  $10^{5.4}$  plaque forming units (pfu) of mouse-adapted RSV, A2 subtype (obtained from Dr. P. Wyde, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TE, USA). Lungs were aseptically removed 4 days later, weighed and homogenized in 2 mL of complete culture medium. The number of pfu in lung homogenates was determined in duplicates as previously described (ref. 19) using vaccine quality Vero cells. These data were subjected to statistic analysis using SigmaStat (Jandel Scientific Software, Guelph, Ont. Canada).

Sera obtained from immunized mice were analyzed for anti-RSV F antibody titres (IgG, IgG1 and IgG2a, respectively) by enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) and for RSV-specific plaque-reduction titres. ELISA were performed using 96-well plates coated with immunoaffinity purified RSV F protein (50 ng/mL) and 2-fold serial dilutions of immune sera. A goat anti-mouse IgG antibody conjugated to alkaline phosphatase (Jackson ImmunoRes., Mississauga, Ont., Canada) was used as secondary antibody. For the measurement of IgG1 and IgG2a antibody titres, the secondary antibodies used were monospecific sheep anti-mouse IgG1 (Serotec, Toronto, Ont., Canada) and rat anti-mouse IgG2a (Zymed, San Francisco, CA, USA) antibodies conjugated to alkaline phosphatase, respectively. Plaque reduction titres were determined according to Prince et al (ref. 19) using vaccine quality Vero cells. Four-fold serial dilutions of immune sera were incubated with 50 pfu of RSV, Long strain (ATCC) in culture medium at 37°C for 1 hr in the presence of 5% CO<sub>2</sub>. Vero cells were then infected with the mixture. Plaques were fixed with 80% methanol and developed 5 days later using a mouse anti-RSV-F monoclonal IgG1 antibody and donkey antimouse IgG antibody conjugated to peroxidase (Jackson ImmunoRes., Mississauga, Ont. Canada). The RSV-specific plaque reduction titre was defined as the dilution of serum sample yielding 60% reduction in the number of plaques. Both ELISA and plaque reduction assays were performed in duplicates and data are expressed as the means of two determinations. These data were subjected to statistic analysis using SigmaStat (Jandel Scientific Software, Guelph, Ont. Canada).

To examine the induction of RSV-specific CTL following DNA immunization, spleens from 2 immunized mice were removed to prepare single cell suspensions which were pooled. Splenocytes were incubated at  $2.5 \times 10^6$  cells/mL in complete RPMI medium containing 10 U/mL murine interleukin 2 (IL-2) with  $\gamma$ -irradiated (3,000 rads) syngeneic splenocytes ( $2.5 \times 10^6$  cells/mL) infected with 1 TCID<sub>50</sub>/cell RSV (Long strain) for 2 hr. The source of murine IL-2 was supernatant of a mouse cell line constitutively secreting a high level of IL-2 obtained from Dr. H. Karasuyama of Basel Institute for Immunology (ref. 20). CTL activity was tested 5 days following the *in vitro* re-stimulation in a standard 4 hr chromium release assay. Target cells were  $5^1\text{Cr}$ -labelled uninfected BALB/c fibroblasts (BC cells) and persistently RSV-infected BCH14 fibroblasts, respectively. Washed responder cells were incubated with  $2 \times 10^3$  target cells at varying effector to target ratios in 200  $\mu\text{L}$  in 96-well V-bottomed tissue-culture plates for 4 hr at 37°C. Spontaneous and total chromium releases were determined by incubating target cells with either medium or 2.5% Triton-X 100 in the absence of responder lymphocytes. Percentage specific chromium release was calculated as (counts-spontaneous counts)/(total counts-spontaneous counts)  $\times$  100. Tests were performed in triplicates and data are expressed as the means of three determinations. For antibody blocking studies in CTL assays, the effector cells were incubated for 1 hr with 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$  final of purified mAb to CD4 (GK1.5) (ref. 21) or mAb against murine CD8 (53-6.7) (ref. 22) before adding chromium labelled BC or BCH4 cells. To determine the effect of anti-class I MHC antibodies on CTL killing, the chromium labelled target cells BC or BCH4 were incubated with 20  $\mu\text{L}$  of culture supernate of hybridoma that secretes a mAb that recognizes K<sup>d</sup> and D<sup>d</sup> of class I MHC (34-1-2S) (ref. 23) prior to the addition of effector cells.

### Example 3

This Example describes the immunogenicity and protection by polynucleotide immunization by the intramuscular route.

To characterize the antibody responses following i.m. DNA administration, immune sera were analyzed for anti-RSV F IgG antibody titre by ELISA and for RSV-specific plaque reduction titre, respectively. All four plasmid constructs were found to be immunogenic. Sera obtained from mice immunized with pXL1-4

demonstrated significant anti-RSV F IgG titres and RSV-specific plaque reduction titres as compared to the placebo group (Table 1 below) ( $P < 0.0061$  and  $< 0.0001$ , respectively, Mann-Whitney Test). However, there is no significant difference in either anti-RSV F IgG titre or RSV-specific plaque reduction titre among mice immunized with either pXL1, pXL2, pXL3 or pXL4.

To evaluate the protective ability of pXL1-4 against primary RSV infection of the lower respiratory tract, immunized mice were challenged intranasally with mouse-adapted RSV and viral lung titres post challenge were assessed. All four plasmid constructs were found to protect animals against RSV infection. A significant reduction in the viral lung titre was observed in mice immunized with pXL1-4 as compared to the placebo group ( $P < 0.0001$ , Mann-Whitney Test). However, varying degrees of protection were observed depending on the plasmid. In particular, PXL1 was more protective than pXL3 ( $P = 0.00109$ , Mann-Whitney Test), and pXL4 more than pXL3 ( $P = 0.00125$ ), whereas only pXL2 induced complete protection. This conclusion was confirmed by another analysis with number of fully protected mice as end point (Fisher Exact Test). Constructs pXL1, pXL2 or pXL4 conferred a higher degree of protection than pXL3 ( $P < 0.004$ , Fisher Exact Test) which was not more effective than placebo. Only pXL2 conferred full protection in all immunized mice.

The above statistical analysis revealed that pXL1 conferred more significant protection than pXL3. The former expresses the truncated and secretory form and the latter the intact membrane anchored form of the RSV F protein. Furthermore, pXL4 was shown to be more protective than pXL3. The difference between these two constructs is the presence of the intron II sequence in pXL4. Construct pXL2 which expresses the secretory form of the RSV-F in the context of the intron II sequence was the only plasmid that conferred complete protection in all immunized mice in the protocol of Example 2.

#### Example 4

This Example describes the influence of the route of administration of pXL2 on its immunogenicity and protective ability.

The i.m. and i.d. routes of DNA administration were compared for immunogenicity in terms of anti-RSV F antibody titres and RSV-specific plaque



reduction titres. Analyses of the immune sera (Table 2 below) revealed that the i.d. route of DNA administration was as immunogenic as the i.m. route as judged by anti-RSV F IgG and IgG1 antibody responses as well as RSV-specific plaque reduction titres. However, only the i.m. route induced significant anti-RSV F IgG2a antibody responses, whereas the IgG2a isotype titre was negligible when the i.d. route was used. The i.m. and i.d. routes were also compared with respect to the induction of RSV-specific CTL. Significant RSV-specific CTL activity was detected in mice immunized intramuscularly. In contrast, the cellular response was significantly lower in mice inoculated intradermally (Table 3 below). In spite of these differences, protection against primary RSV infection of the lower respiratory tract was observed in both groups of mice immunized via either route (Table 4 below). The CTL induced by RSV-F DNA are classical CD8+ class I restricted CTL. The target cells, BCH4 fibroblasts express class I MHC only and do not express class II MHC. Further, prior incubation of BCH4 target cells with anti class-I MHC antibodies significantly blocked the lytic activity of RSV-F DNA induced CTL line. While anti-CD8 antibody could partially block lysis of BCH4 cells, antibody to CD4 molecule had no effect at all (Table 5 below). Lack of total blocking by mAb to CD8 could either be due to CTL being CD8 independent (meaning that even though they are CD8+ CTL, their TCR has enough affinity for class I MHC+peptide and it does not require CD8 interaction with the alpha 3 of class I MHC) or the amount of antibody used in these experiments was limiting. There was no detectable lysis of YAC-1 (NK sensitive target) cells (data not shown).

#### Example 5

This Example describes immunization studies in cotton rats using pXL2.

The immune response of cotton rats to DNA immunization was analyzed by the protocol shown in Table 6 below. On day -5, 40 cotton rats were randomly selected and divided into 8 groups of 5. Cotton rats in groups 1 and 7 were inoculated intramuscularly (i.m.) into the tibia anterior (TA) muscles bilaterally with cardiotoxin (1.0  $\mu$ M). On day -1, the cotton rats in group 8 were inoculated in the TA muscles with bupivacaine (0.25%). On day 0, several animals in each group were bled to determine levels of RSV-specific antibodies in the serum of the test animals prior to administration of vaccines. All of the animals were then inoculated

i.m. or intradermally (i.d.) with 200 µg of plasmid DNA, placebo (non-RSV-specific DNA), 100 median cotton rat infectious doses (CRID50; positive control) of RSV, or of formalin inactivated RSV prepared in Hep-2 tissue culture cells and adjuvanted in alum. Forty-four days later the cotton rats in groups 1 & 7 were reinoculated with  
5 cardiotoxin in the TA muscles. Four days later (48 days after priming with vaccine), the animals in group 8 were reinoculated with bupivacains in the TA muscle of the right leg. The next day, (seven weeks after priming with vaccine) all of the animals were bled and all, except those in the group given live RSV, were boosted with the same material and doses used on day 0. 29 days later, each cotton rat was bled and  
10 then challenged intranasally (i.n.) with 100 CRID50 RSV A2 grown in Hep-2 tissue culture cells. Four days after this virus challenge (day +88) all of the cotton rats were killed and their lungs removed. One lobe from each set of lungs was fixed in formalin and then processed for histologic evaluation of pulmonary histopathology. The remaining lobes of lung will be assessed for the presence and levels of RSV.  
15 Each of the sera collected on days 0, 49 and 78 were tested for RSV-neutralizing activity, anti-RSV fusion activity and RSV-specific ELISA antibody.

The RSV neutralizing titres on day +49 and +78 are shown in Tables 7(a) below and 7(b) below respectively. As can be seen from the results shown in Table 7(a), on day +49 the animals immunized with live RSV and DNA immunization had  
20 substantial RSV serum neutralizing titres. The animals immunized with formalin-inactivated RSV had a neutralizing titre equivalent to the placebo group on day +49 but following boosting titres by day +78 had reached 5.8 ( $\log_{10}/0.05$ ). Boosting had no significant effect upon animals immunized with live RSV or by i.m. plasmid immunization.

25 RSV titres in nasal washes (upper respiratory tract) on day +82 are shown in Table 8 below. RSV titres in the lungs (lower respiratory tract) on day +82 are shown in Table 9 below. All of the vaccines provided protection against lung infection but, under these conditions, only live virus provided total protection against upper respiratory tract infection.

30 The lungs from the cotton rats were examined histologically for pulmonary histopathology and the results are shown in Table 10 below. With the exception of lung sections obtained from Group 9 which were essentially free of inflammatory

cells or evidence of inflammation, and those from Group 3, which exhibited the maximal pulmonary pathology seen in this study, all of the sections of lung obtained from the other groups looked familiar, i.e. scattered inflammatory cells were present in most fields, and there was some thickening of septae. These are evidence of mild  
5 inflammatory diseases. Large numbers of inflammatory cells and other evidence of inflammation were present in sections of lung from Group 3 (in which formalin-inactivated [FI] RSV vaccine was given prior to virus challenge). This result indicated that immunization with plasmid DNA expressing the RSV F protein does not result in pulmonary histopathology different from the placebo, whereas FI-RSV  
10 caused more severe pathology.

#### Example 6

This Example describes the determination of local lung cytokine expression profile in mice immunized with pXL2 after RSV challenge.

Balb/C mice were immunized at 0 and 6 weeks with 100 µg of pXL2,  
15 prepared as described in Example 1, and challenged with RSV i.n. at 10 weeks. Control animals were immunized with FI-RSV and live RSV and challenged with RSV according to the same protocol. Four days post viral challenge, lungs were removed from immunized mice and immediately frozen in liquid nitrogen. Total RNA was prepared from lungs homogenized in TRIzol/β-mercaptoethanol by  
20 chloroform extraction and isopropanol precipitation. Reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) was then carried out on the RNA samples using either IL-4, IL-5 or IFN-γ specific primers from Clone Tech. The amplified products were then liquid-hybridized to cytokine-specific <sup>32</sup>P-labeled probes from Clone Tech, resolved on 5% polyacrylamide gels and quantitated by scanning of the  
25 radioactive signals in the gels. Three mouse lungs were removed from each treatment group and analyzed for lung cytokine expression for a minimum of two times. The data is presented in Figure 9 and represents the means and standard deviations of these determinations.

As may be seen from the data presented in Figure 9:

- 30 1. Immunization with live RSV intranasally (i.n.) resulted in a balanced cytokine profile (IFN-γ, IL-4 and IL-5), whereas that with FI-RSV

intramuscularly (i.m.) resulted in a Th2 predominance (elevated IL-4 and IL-5). These results are similar to what were reported in the literature.

2. Immunization with pXL2 containing the secretory (sec.) form of FI via either the i.m. or intradermal (i.d.) route gave rise to a balanced cytokine profile similar to that with live RSV immunization.

3. The magnitude of the cytokine responses with i.m. and i.d. immunization using pXL2 expressing a secretory form of the protein in significantly higher than that with live RSV immunization.

#### Example 7

This Example describes the construction of a plasmid vector encoding the RSV F protein and containing the 5' UTR and signal peptide of Herpes Simplex Virus I (HSV I) gD in accordance with the invention.

Plasmid p82M35B was prepared following the scheme shown in Figure 10. Plasmid pVR1012 (Vical) (Figure 11; SEQ ID No: 6) containing the CMV promoter, intron A, and the BGH poly A sequences, was linearized with restriction enzyme Pst I and made blunt ended with T4 DNA polymerase. The rabbit  $\beta$ -globin intron II sequence was retrieved from plasmid pSG5 (Stratagene; ref. 14) by Cla I and Eco RI digestion, and the 0.6 kb fragment was isolated and made blunt ended by treatment with Klenow fragment polymerase. The rabbit  $\beta$ -globin intron II fragment was then ligated to the Pst I/blunt ended VR1012 plasmid (Fig. 10). This vector was then restricted with Eco RV and dephosphorylated.

The secreted form of RSV F was isolated from plasmid pXL2 (Example 1; Fig. 5) by digestion with Sal I, made blunt end by treatment with Klenow fragment polymerase, then restricted with Kpn I to produce a 5' Kpn I, 3' blunt ended fragment. The HSV I gD sequence was synthesized as a synthetic oligonucleotide having the DNA (SEQ ID No: 7) and derived amino acid (SEQ ID No: 8) sequences shown in Figure 12.

The gD oligonucleotide has a 5' blunt end and 3' Kpn I recognition sequence. A three-way ligation was performed with the isolated RSV F fragment, gD oligo and the VR1012 plasmid, to produce plasmid p82M35B (Fig. 10).

### Example 8

This Example illustrates the expression and secretion of RSV F protein *in vitro*.

BHK cells were transfected with either p82M35B, prepared as described in  
5 Example 7, its counterpart containing the autologous RSV F signal peptide (pXL2),  
prepared as described in Example 6, or the vector backbone alone (placebo) using  
Lipofectin (Gibco/BRL). Forty-eight hours post transfection, supernatant fractions  
were recovered and subjected to RSV F protein quantification using a F-specific  
enzyme-linked immunoabsorbent assay (ELISA). Three independent transfection  
10 assays were performed for each vector.

ELISAs were performed using one affinity-purified mouse monoclonal anti-  
RSV F antibody (2  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ) as the capturing reagent and another biotinolated  
monoclonal anti-RSV F antibody (0.1  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ) as the detection reagent. Horseradish  
peroxidase-labelled avidin (Pierce) was subsequently used. The RSV F standard  
15 protein used was purified from detergent-lysates of cultured virus by immunoaffinity  
chromatography.

Table 11 (below) shows the results obtained. As seen in Table II, compared  
to placebo, both p82M35B and pXL2 mediated significant F protein  
expression/secretion from the BHK cells 48 hours post transfection. Furthermore, a  
20 markedly higher level of the F protein was consistently detected in the supernatant  
fraction of p82M35B-transfected BHK cells than that of pXL2-transfected cells,  
representing a 5.4-fold improvement over the latter. These results indicate that  
replacement of the coding sequence for the autologous RSV F signal peptide with  
that for the 5'UTR and signal peptide of HSV I gD significantly enhanced F protein  
25 expression/secretion *in vitro*.

### Example 9

This Example illustrates immunogenicity studies carried out using  
p82M35B.

Tibialis anterior muscles of BALB/c mice (male, 6 to 8 weeks old) (Jackson  
30 Lab., Bar Harbor, ME, USA) were bilaterally injected with 2 x 50  $\mu\text{g}$  (1  $\mu\text{g}/\mu\text{L}$  in  
PBS) of p82M35B, pXL2 or the vector backbone alone (placebo). In some groups, 5  
days prior to DNA injection, the muscles were treated with 2 x 50  $\mu\text{L}$  (10  $\mu\text{M}$  in

PBS) of cardiotoxin (Latoxan, France), while such pretreatment was omitted in others. The animals were boosted with the same dose of plasmid DNA 6 weeks later. Mice in the positive control group were immunized intranasally (i.n.) with  $10^6$  plaque forming units (pfu) of a clinical RSV strain of the A2 subtype grown in Hep2  
5 cells (ref. 16).

Antisera obtained from immunized mice were analyzed for anti-RSV F IgG antibody titres using specific ELISA and for RSV-specific plaque-reduction titres. ELISAs were performed using 96-well plates coated with immunoaffinity-purified RSV F protein (50 ng/mL) and 2-fold serial dilutions of immune sera. A goat anti-  
10 mouse IgG antibody conjugated to alkaline phosphatase (Jackson ImmunoRes., Mississauga, Ont., Canada) was used as secondary antibody. Plaque reduction titres were determined according to Prince et al. (ref. 19) using vaccine-quality Vero cells. Four-fold serial dilutions of immune sera were incubated with 50 pfu of the RSV Long strain (ATCC) in culture medium at 37°C for 1 hr in the presence of 5% CO<sub>2</sub>  
15 and the mixtures were used to infect Vero cells. Plaques were fixed with 80% methanol and developed 5 days later using a mouse anti-RSV F monoclonal IgG1 antibody and donkey anti-mouse IgG antibody conjugated to peroxidase (Jackson ImmunoRes. Mississauga, Ont.). The RSV-specific plaque reduction titre was defined as the dilution of serum sample yielding 60% reduction in plaque number.  
20 Both ELISAs and plaque reduction assays were performed in duplicate and data are expressed as the means of two determinations.

The results of these studies are set forth in Table 12 below. For the induction of serum antibody responses (Table 12), p82M35B is effective without the need of cardiotoxin pretreatment under the DNA dose and immunization regimen  
25 used, resulting in anti-F IgG titre of  $7.2 \pm 1.1$  ( $\log_2$  titre/100) and RSV-specific plaque reduction titre of  $11.8 \pm 0.9$  ( $\log_2$ ) after two immunizations. In contrast, the antibody titres elicited by pXL2 in the absence of the cardiotoxin pretreatment were significantly lower (IgG titre of  $2.9 \pm 2.3$  and plaque reduction titre of  $8.2 \pm 1.9$ ). However, serum antibody responses elicited by pXL2 were significantly improved  
30 with the cardiotoxin pretreatment step (IgG titre of  $7.4 \pm 1.1$  and plaque reduction titre of  $10.5 \pm 0.8$ ). The placebo was unable to elicit a detectable serum antibody response in the absence or presence of the cardiotoxin pretreatment step.

This trend was extendible to results of the protection study (Table 12). Vector p82M35B conferred full protection against RSV infection of lungs in the absence of the cardiotoxin pretreatment. In contrast, pXL2 only conferred partial protection under the same conditions. However, full protection was achieved with the pXL2 vector when cardiotoxin pretreatment step was included in the immunization regimen. No protection was observed with the placebo with or without the cardiotoxin pretreatment step.

These results show the replacement of the coding sequence for the autologous RSV F signal peptide with that for the 5'UTR and signal peptide of HSV I gD resulted in significant enhancement in not only F protein expression/secretion assessed *in vitro* (Example 8), but also immunogenicity to the F protein as well as protective ability against RSV infection assessed in the mouse model.

#### SUMMARY OF THE DISCLOSURE

In summary of this disclosure, the present invention provides certain novel vectors containing genes encoding an RSV F proteins, methods of immunization using such vectors and methods of diagnosis using such vectors. Modifications are possible within the scope of this invention.

Table 1: Immunogenic and Protective Abilities of pXL1-4 Mice via the i.m. Route

Plasmid DNA Immunogen	No. Mice	Mean Anti-RSV F ELISA Titre(IgG)* (Log <sub>2</sub> /100 ± SD)	Mean Plaque Reduction Titre* (Log <sub>4</sub> ± SD)	Post RSV Challenge	
				Mean Virus Lung Titre# (pfu/g lung) (Log <sub>10</sub> ± SD)	No. Fully Protected Mice**
pXL1	8	3.00 ± 1.85	3.74 ± 0.98	0.72 ± 0.99	5
pXL2	9	5.78 ± 1.72	4.82 ± 0.51	0.00 ± 0.00	9
pXL3	8	3.75 ± 2.05	4.59 ± 1.16	2.77 ± 0.72	0
pXL4	9	5.44 ± 1.13	5.18 ± 0.43	0.66 ± 1.00	6
Placebo**	12	0.58 ± 2.89	0.18 ± 0.62	3.92 ± 0.27	0

\* These sets of data from sera obtained 1 week prior to the viral challenge

# Detection sensitivity of the assay was 10<sup>1.96</sup> pfu/g lung.

\*\* The term, fully protected mice, refers to animals with no detectable RSV in lungs post challenge.



Table 2. Immunogenicity of pXL2 in Mice\*

Route	No. Mice	Mean Anti-RSV F ELISA Titre (Log <sub>2</sub> /100 + SD)			Mean Plaque Reduction Titre (Log <sub>4</sub> ± SD)
		IgG	IgG1	IgG2a	
i.m	8	7.63±0.92	4.25±1.91	4.38±1.92	4.18±0.88
i.d.	7	7.00±1.00	5.00±1.00	0.14±0.38	3.65±0.59
Placebo(i.m.)	9	0.50±0.51	0.00±0.00	0.00±0.00	0.18±0.50

\* These sets of data are from sera obtained 1 week prior to the viral challenge.

Table 3. Induction of RSV-specific CTL Following DNA Immunization\*

Route	E:T Ratio	% Specific Lysis	
		BC	BCH4
i.m.	200:1	23.3	100.6
	100:1	17.0	62.4
	50:1	19.9	64.1
	25:1	22.3	46.4
i.d.	100:1	20.9	26.1
	50:1	21.7	19.1
	25:1	7.1	7.0
	12.5:1	2.8	2.3

\* These set of data were obtained from immunized mice immediately prior to RSV challenge.

Table 4. Immunoprotective Ability of pXL2 in Mice

Route	No. Mice	Post RSV Challenge	
		Mean Virus Lung Titre* (pfu/g lung)	No. Fully Protected Mice#
i.m.	8	0.00±0.00	8
i.d.	7	0.43±1.13	6
Placebo (i.m.)	9	4.30±0.22	0

\* Detection sensitivity of the assay was  $10^{1.69}$  pfu/g lung.

# The term, fully protected mice, refers to animals with no detectable RSV in lungs post challenge.

Table 5. RSV specific CTL included by i.m. DNA immunization are class I restricted CTL

E:T Ratio	BCH4	BCH4 + anti-CD4	BCH4 + anti-CD8	BCH4 + anti-class I MHC
100:1	52.03	54.3	39.4	8.6
50:1	44.4	47.2	27.4	6.2
25:1	28.6	26.3	14.8	1
12.5:1	18.2	15	8	-2.7

Table 6

Group	Antigen	RSV-specific dose	Inoc. route	Pretreatment/Adjuvant	Day 0	Day 49	Day 78	Day 88
1	Placebo	0	I.M.	Cardiotoxin	Prebleed, several cotton rats per group; prime all animals	Bleed all animals; boost all except those in group 2	Challenge with RSV A2 I.N. after bleeding all	Harv. animals and do histologic evaluation, pulmonary virus titers, antibodies
2	Live RSV	100 CRID50	I.N.	None				
3	FI-RSV		I.M.	Alum				
5	pXL2	200 µg	I.M.	None				
6	pXL2	200 µg	I.D.	None				
7	pXL2	200 µg	I.M.	Cardiotoxin				
8	pXL2	200 µg	I.M.	Bupivacaine				

Table 7(a). RSV Serum Neutralizing Titers on Day 49

Group	Antigen	RSV-specific dose	Inoc. route	Nt. antibody titer ( $\log_2/0.05$ ml) in CR no.				Mean titer $\log_2/0.05$	Stand. Dev.
				1	2	3	4		
1	Placebo	0	I.M.	4	3	2	2	2.75	1.0
2	Live RSV	100 CRID50	I.N.	9	9	9	9	9	0.0
3	FI-RSV		I.M.	0	4	2	2	2.0	1.6
5	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	9	8	8	7	8.0	0.8
6	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.D.	5	2	5	5	4.3	1.5
7	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	8	8	9	9	8.5	0.6
8	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	8	9	6	6	7.3	1.5

Table 7(b). RSV Serum Neutralizing Titers on Day 78

Group	Antigen	RSV-specific dose	Inoc. route	Nt. antibody titer ( $\log_2/0.05$ ml) in CR no.				Mean titer $\log_2/0.05$	Stand. Dev.
				1	2	3	4		
1	Placebo	0	I.M.	3	2	3	4		
2	Live RSV	100 CRID50	I.N.	8	9	8	Died	3.0	1.0
3	FI-RSV						9	8.5	0.6
5	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	8	4	6	5	5.8	1.7
6	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	7	8	8	8	7.8	0.5
7	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.D.	8	6	6	Died	6.7	1.2
8	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	8	9	9	8	8.7	0.6
			I.M.	8	7	9	9	8.3	1.0

Table 8. RSV Titers in Nasal Washes on Day 82

Group	Antigen	RSV-specific dose	Inoc. route	RSV titer ( $\log_{10}/0.05$ ml) in cotton rat no.				Mean titer $\log_{10}/0.05$	Stand. Dev.
				1	2	3	4		
1	Placebo	0	I.M.	3.4	3.3	3.3	Died	3.3	0.1
2	Live RSV	100 CRID50	I.N.	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
3	FI-RSV		I.M.	0	0	2.8	0	0.7	1.4
5	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	3.3	2.3	3.3	2.3	2.8	0.6
6	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	Died	N.D.	N.D.
7	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	2.3	0	0	3.2	1.4	1.6
8	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.

N.D. = non-determined

Table 9. Titers in Lungs on Day 82

Group	Antigen	RSV-specific dose	Inoc. route	RSV titer ( $\log_{10}$ /g lung) in cotton rat no.				Mean titer $\log_{10}/0.05$	Stand. Dev.
				1	2	3	4		
1	Placebo	0	I.M.	4.7	4.2	3.7	Died	4.2	0.5
2	Live RSV	100 CRID50	I.N.	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
3	FI-RSV	$10^5$ PFU	I.M.	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
5	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	0	2.2	0	0	0.6	1.1
6	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.D.	0	2.2	2.7	3.2	2.0	N.D.
7	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0
8	pXL2	200 $\mu$ g	I.M.	0	0	0	0	0.0	N.D.

N.D. = non-determined



**Table 10. Summary of Histopathology Results Seen in Sections of Cotton Rat Lung.**

Group	Treatment	Major Observations & Comments
1.	Placebo + RSV	Scattered individual and groups of macrophages and polymorphonuclear neutrophils (PMN) in all fields. Overt thickening of septae. Occasional pyknotic cells seen. Overall: mild to moderate inflammation.
2.	Live RSV	Isolated macrophages seen in most fields. Scattered PMN. Overall: minimal inflammation
3.	FI-RSV + RSV	Virtually every field contains numerous mononuclear cells & PMN. Pyknotic cells and debris common. Thickened septae. Evidence of exacerbated disease.
5.	Plasmid + RSV	Isolated macrophages seen in most fields. Occasional PMN seen. Very similar to live virus group.
6.	Plasmid i.d. + RSV	Isolated macrophages seen in most fields. Occasional PMN seen.
7.	Plasmid + CT + RSV	Isolated mononuclear cells and PMN seen in most fields.
8.	Plasmid + Biv + RSV	Scattered mononuclear cells and PMN seen in most fields.
9.	Normal CR Lung	Few leukocytes evidence. Airy, open appearance. Thin septae.

CT = carditoxin

Biv = bupivacaine

**Table 11. Expression/Secretion of the RSV F protein from BHK cells  
(48 hr post transfection)**

Plasmid Construct	F Protein Secretion (mean $\pm$ S.D.) (ng/mL)	Magnitude of Improvement
Placebo	0.0 $\pm$ 0.0	
p82M35B	32.1 $\pm$ 2.06	5.4 x (over pXL2)
pXL2	5.9 $\pm$ 0.6	

Table 12. Immunoprotective Ability of DNA-F in BALB/c Mice

Immunogen	Anti-F IgG Titre Log2 (titre/100) 10 weeks	RSV-Specific Plaque Reduction Titre (Log <sub>2</sub> titre)	Mean Virus Lung Titre* (pfu/g lung) (Log <sub>2</sub> 10 ± SD)	No. Fully protected # No. Immunized
Placebo (i.m.)	0.0 ± 0.0	0.0 ± 0.0	4.3 ± 0.5	0/6
p82M35B (i.m.)	7.2 ± 1.1	11.8 ± 0.9	0.0 ± 0.0	6/6
pXL2 (i.m.)	2.9 ± 2.3	8.2 ± 1.9	2.9 ± 1.7	1/6
pXL2 + cardiotoxin	7.4 ± 1.1	10.5 ± 0.8	0.0 ± 0.0	6/6
RSV (i.n.)	8.5 ± 2.7	12.4 ± 0.7	0.0 ± 0.0	6/6

\* Sensitivity of assay: 10<sup>1.69</sup> pfu/g lung.

# The term, fully protected mice, refers to animals with no detectable RSV in the lungs 4 days post viral challenge.

REFERENCES

1. McIntosh K., Canock, R.M. In: Fields BN, Knipe, DM, editors. Virology. New York: Raven Press: 1990: 1045-1072.
2. Katz SL., In: New Vaccine Development establishing priorities. Vol. 1. Washington: National Academic Press: 1985: 397-409.
3. Wertz GW, Sullender WM., Biotechnology 1992; 20: 151-176.
4. Johnson et al., J. Virol 1987, 61: 3163-3166.
5. Pemberton et al., J. Gen Virol. 1987, 68: 2177-2182.
6. Crowe, J.E., Vaccine 1995, 13: 415-421.
7. WO 90/11092
8. WO 94/21797
9. Ulmer, Current Opinion, Invest Drugs, 1993, 2: 983-989.
10. Tang et al., Nature 1992, 356: 152-154.
11. Furth et al. Analytical Biochemistry, 1992, 205: 365-368.
12. Pizzorno et al., J. Virol. 1988, 62: 1167-1179.
13. Chapman, B.S.; Thayer, R.M.; Vincent, K.A. and Haigwood, N.L., Nucl. Acids. Res. 1991, 19: 3979-3986.
14. Green, S. Isseman, I., and Sheer, E., Nucl. Acids. Res. 1988, 16: 369.
15. Breathnack, R. and Harris, B.A., Nucl. Acids Res. 1983, 11: 7119-7136.
16. Graham, B.S.; Perkins M.D.; Wright, P.F. and Karzon, D.T. J. Mod. Virol. 1988 26: 153-162.
17. Nabel, G.J. 1993, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 90: 11307-11311.
18. Du, R.P et al. 1994., Biotechnology 12: 813-818.
19. Prince, G.A. et al, 1978. Ame. J. Pathol. 93: 771-790.
20. Karasuyama & Melchers, Eur. J. Immunol. 18, 97-104, 1988.
21. Wilde, David et al. 1983. J. Immunol. 131: 2178-2183.

22. Ledbetter, J.A., Rouse R., Micklem, H. 1980, J. Exp. Med. 152: 280-295
23. Ozato Kerko et al. 1982, Transplantation 34: 113-118.
24. Davis et al., Vaccine 1994, 12: 1503-1509

CLAIMS

1. A vector for *in vivo* administration to a host, comprising:  
a nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein lacking an autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence and including a nucleotide sequence encoding a heterologous signal peptide which enhances the level of expression of RSV F protein in the host; and  
a promoter sequence operatively coupled to the nucleotide sequence for expression of said RSV F protein in the host.
2. The vector of claim 1 wherein said nucleotide sequence encoding a heterologous signal peptide encodes Herpes Simplex Virus I (HSV I) gD.
3. The vector of claim 1 wherein said first nucleotide sequence encodes a RSV F protein fragment lacking a transmembrane coding region.
4. The vector of claim 1 wherein said promoter sequence is an immediate early cytomegalovirus promoter.
5. The vector of claim 1 further including a second nucleotide sequence to enhance the immunoprotective ability of said RSV F protein when expressed *in vivo* from said vector in a host.
6. The vector of claim 5 wherein said second nucleotide sequence comprises a pair of splice sites to prevent aberrant mRNA splicing.
7. The vector of claim 6 wherein said second nucleotide sequence is located between said first nucleotide sequence and said promoter sequence.
8. The vector of claim 7 wherein said second nucleotide sequence is that of rabbit  $\beta$ -globin intron II.
9. The vector of claim 1 which is a plasmid vector.
10. The vector of claim 1 which is plasmid p82M35B as shown in Figure 10.
11. An immunogenic composition for *in vivo* administration to a host for the generation in the host of a protective immune response to RSV F protein, comprising a vector as claimed in claim 1 and a pharmaceutically-acceptable carrier therefor.

12. A method of immunizing a host against disease caused by infection with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which comprises administering to said host an effective amount of an immunogenic composition of claim 11.

13. A method of using a nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein lacking an autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence and including a heterologous signal peptide which enhances the level of expression of RSV F protein, which comprises:

isolating a gene encoding an RSV F protein having an autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence;

substituting a nucleotide sequence encoding a heterologous signal peptide which enhances the level of expression of RSV F protein for the nucleotide sequence encoding the autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence to form said nucleotide sequence;

operatively linking said nucleotide sequence to at least one control sequence to produce a vector, said control sequence directing expression of said RSV F protein when said vector is introduced into a host to produce an immune response to said RSV F protein; and

introducing said vector into the host.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said nucleotide sequence encoding a heterologous signal peptide encodes Herpes Simplex Virus I (HSV I) gD.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein said nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein encodes an RSV F protein lacking the transmembrane region.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one control sequence comprises the immediate early cytomegalovirus promoter.

17. The method of claim 16 including the step of:

operatively linking said nucleotide sequence to an immunoprotective enhancing sequence to produce an enhanced immunoprotection to said RSV F protein in said host.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said immunoprotective enhancing sequence is introduced into said vector between said control sequence and said nucleotide sequence.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein said immunoprotection enhancing sequence comprises a pair of splice sites to prevent aberrant mRNA splicing.
20. The method of claim 19 wherein said immunoprotection enhancing sequence is that of rabbit  $\beta$ -globin intron II.
21. The method of claim 13 wherein said nucleotide sequence is contained within the plasmid vector p82M35B.
22. A method of producing a vaccine for protection of a host against disease caused by infection with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which comprises:
  - isolating a first nucleotide sequence encoding an RSV F protein having an autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence;
  - substituting a nucleotide sequence encoding a heterologous signal peptide which enhances the level of expression of RSV F protein for the nucleotide sequence encoding the autologous RSV F signal peptide sequence to form a second nucleotide sequence;
  - operatively linking said second nucleotide sequence to at least one control sequence to produce a non-replicating vector, the control sequence directing expression of said RSV F protein when introduced into a host to produce an immune response to said RSV F protein; and
  - formulating said vector as a vaccine for *in vivo* administration.
23. The method of claim 22 wherein said non-replicating vector is the plasmid vector p82M35B.
24. A vaccine produced by the method of claim 22.



10/39

## FIG.3D.

ASP VAL SER SER VAL ILE THR SER LEU GLY ALA ILE VAL SER CYS TYR GLY LYS THR  
 GATGTAAGCAGCTCCGTTATCACATCTCTAGGAGCCATTGTGTCAATGCTATGGCAAACACT  
 CTACATTCTCGTAGGCAATAGTGTAGAGATCCTCGGTAACACAGTACGATACCGTTTGA  
 1210 1220 1230 1240 1250 1260

LYS CYS THR ALA SER ASN LYS ASN ARG GLY ILE ILE LYS THR PHE SER ASN GLY CYS ASP  
 AAATGTACAGCATCCAATAAATAATCGTGAATCATATAAAGACATTTTCTAAACGGGTGTGAT  
 TTTACATGTCTAGGTTATTTTGTAGCACCTTAGTATTTCTGTAAAGATTGCCACACACTA  
 1270 1280 1290 1300 1310 1320

TYR VAL SER ASN LYS GLY VAL ASP THR VAL SER VAL GLY ASN THR LEU TYR TYR VAL ASN  
 TATGTATCAATAAAGGGGTGGACACTGTGTCTGTAGGTACACATTTATATTTATGTAAAT  
 ATACATAGTTTATTTCCACCCTGTGACACAGACATCCATTGTGTAAATAATAACATTTA  
 1330 1340 1350 1360 1370 1380

LYS GLN GLU GLY LYS SER LEU TYR VAL LYS GLY GLU PRO ILE ILE ASN PHE TYR ASP PRO  
 AAGCAAGAAGGCAAAAGTCTCTATGTAAAGGTGAACCAATAAJAAATTTCTATGACCCCA  
 TTCGTTCTTCCGTTTTCAGAGATACATTTTCCACTTGGTTATTTAAAGATACTGGGT  
 1390 1400 1410 1420 1430 1440

LEU VAL PHE PRO SER ASP GLU PHE ASP ALA SER ILE SER GLN VAL ASN GLU LYS ILE ASN  
 TTAGTATTTCCCTCTGATGAATTTGATGCATCAATATCTCAAGTCAATGAGAAGATTAAAC  
 AATCATAAGGGGAGACTACTTAAACTACGTAGTTATAGAGTTCAGTTACTTCTCTAAATTG  
 1450 1460 1470 1480 1490 1500

GLN SER LEU ALA PHE ILE ARG LYS SER ASP GLU LEU LEU HIS ASN VAL ASN ALA GLY LYS  
 CAGAGTTAGCATTTATTCGTAAATCCGATGAATTTATTACATAATGTAATGCTGGTAA  
 GTCTCAAATCGTAAATAAGCATTTAGGCTACTTAAATAATGTATTACATTTTACGACCATTT  
 1510 1520 1530 1540 1550 1560

SER THR THR ASN ILE MET Thr Stop Stop Bam HI  
 TCAACCAACAATAATCATGACTTGATAATGAGGATCC  
 AGTTGGTGTATTATAGTACTGAACATATTACTCCTAGG  
 1570

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

11/39

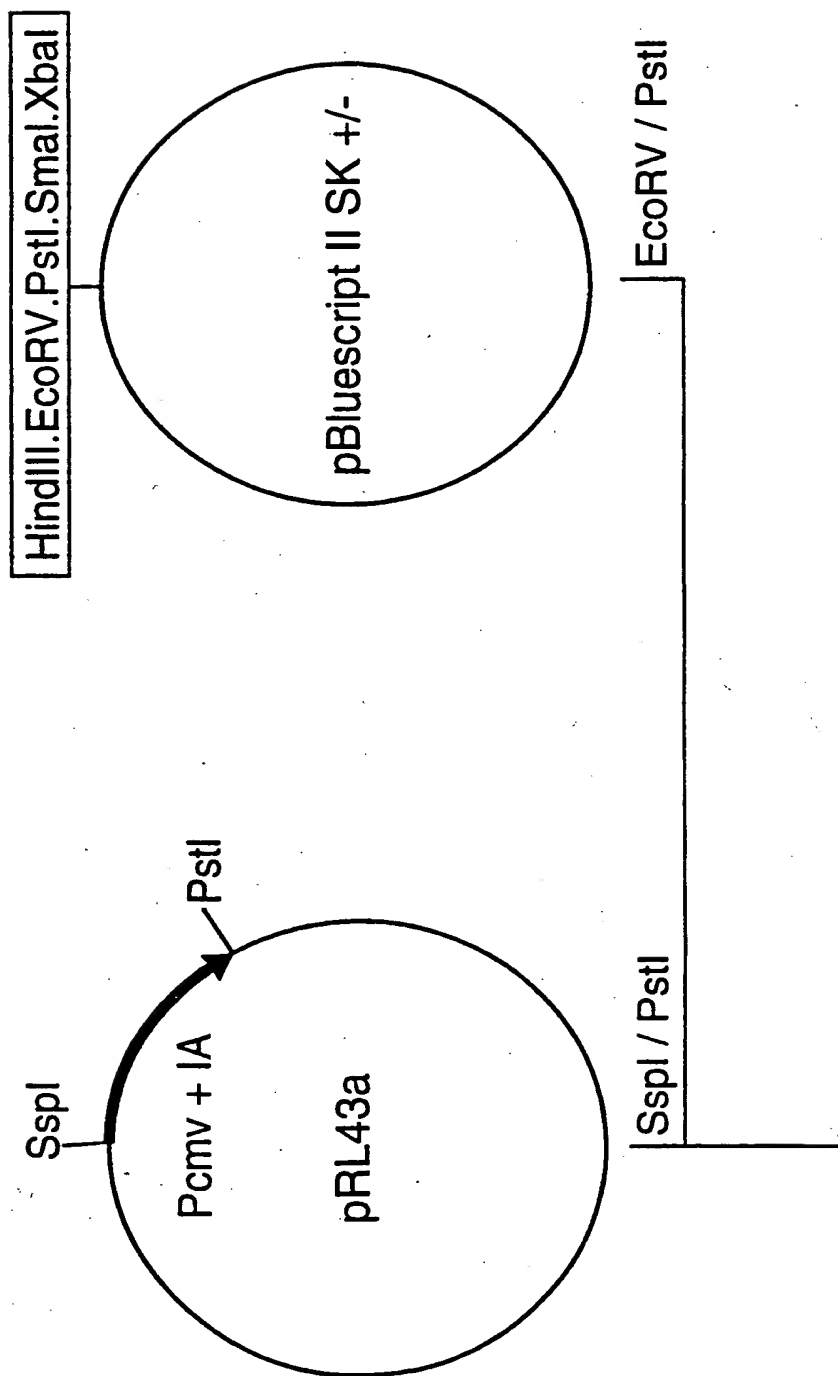


FIG.4A

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

12/39

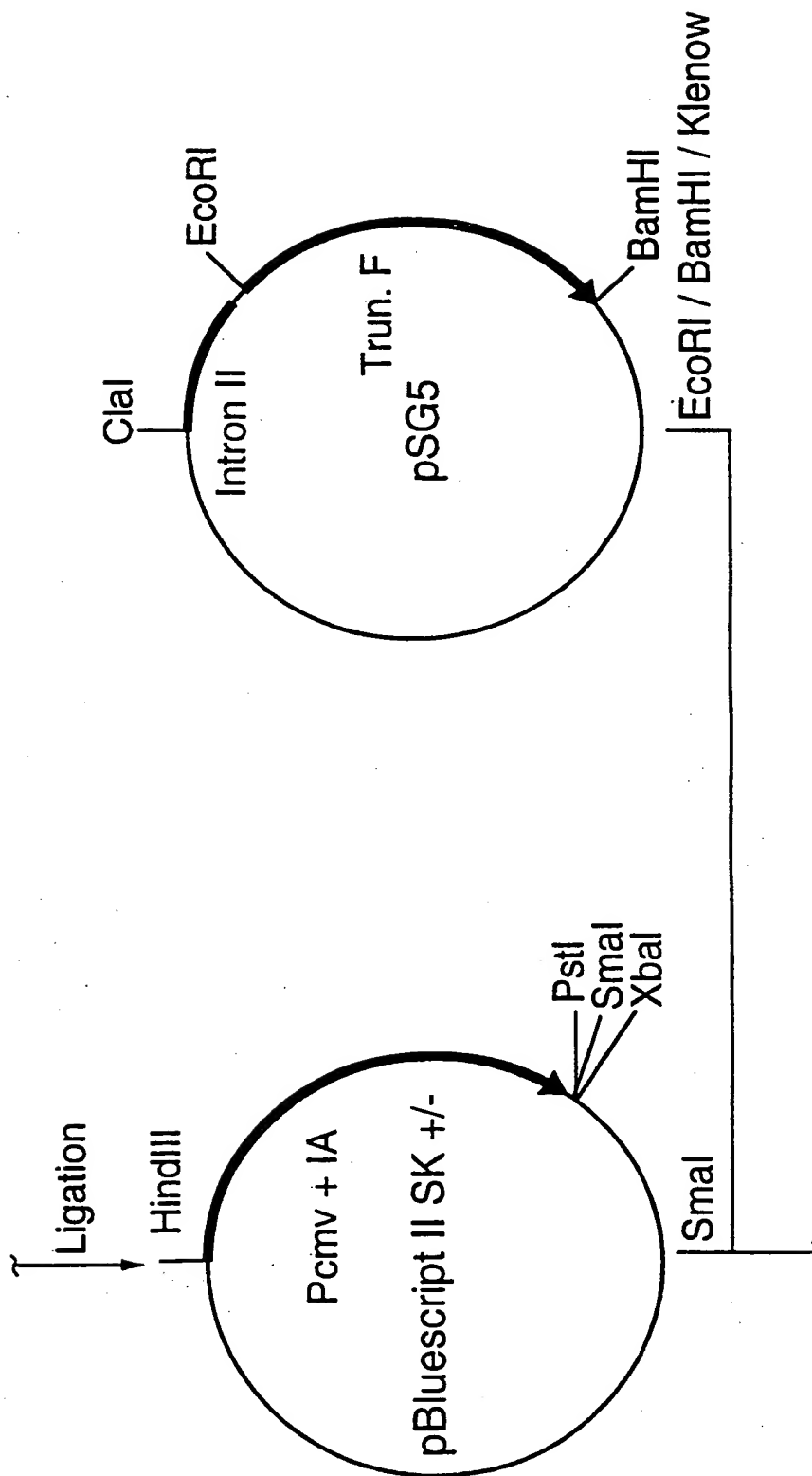


FIG.4B

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

13/39

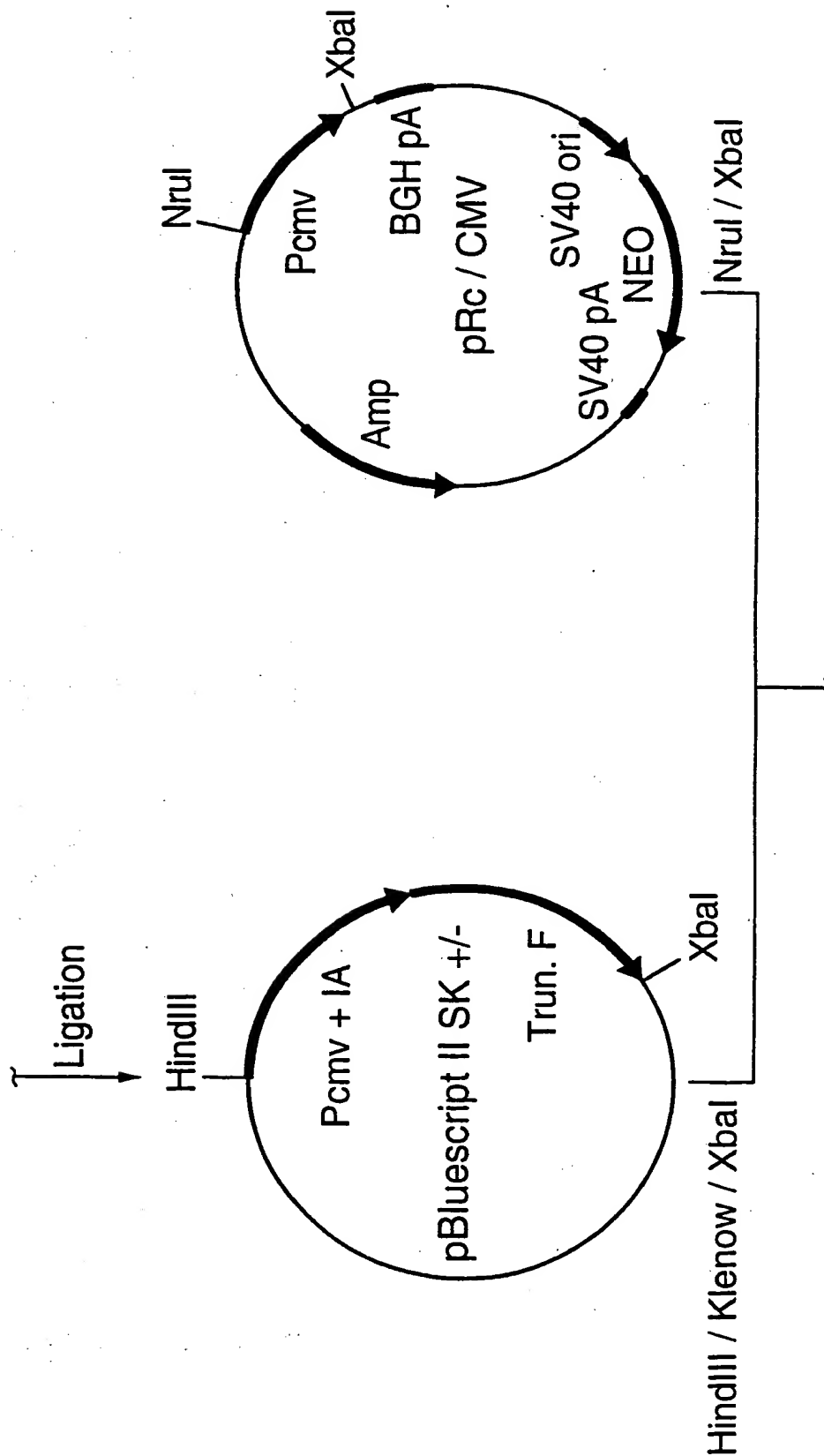


FIG.4C

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**



14 / 39

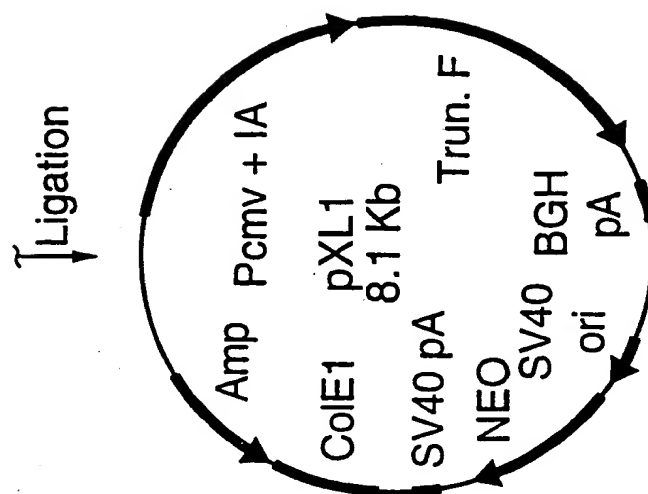


FIG.4D

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

15 / 39

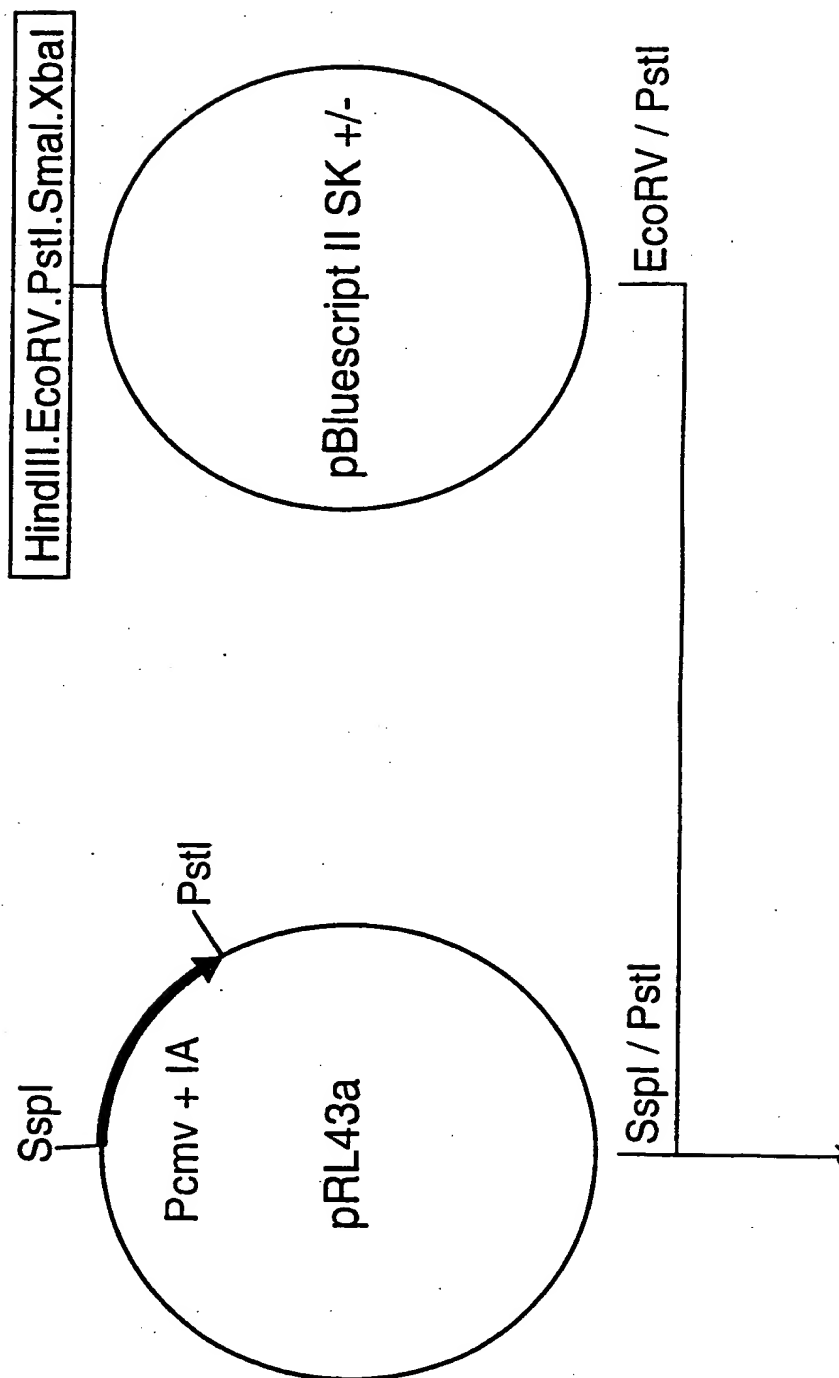


FIG.5A

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

16/39

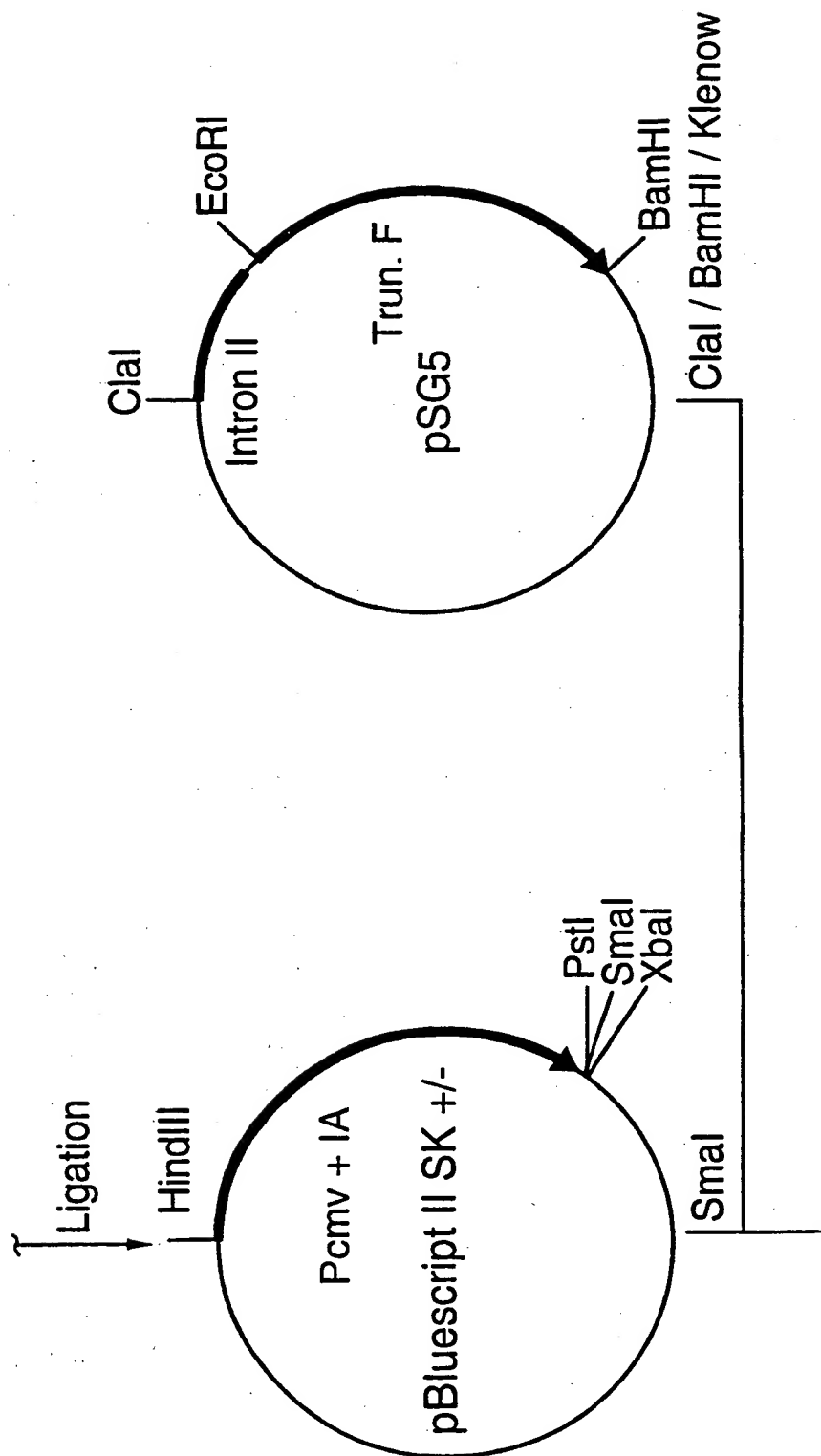


FIG.5B

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

17/39

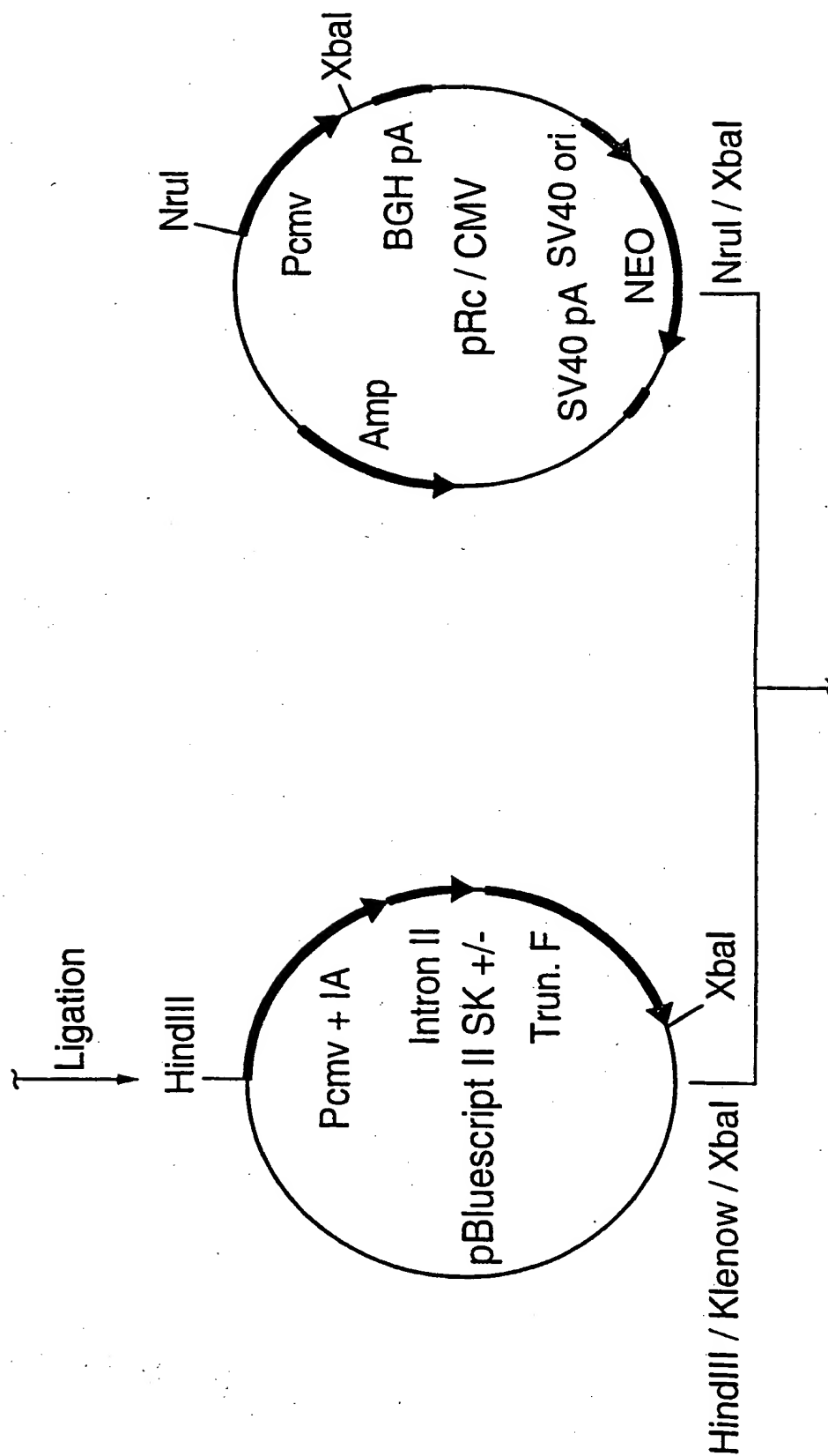


FIG.5C

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**



18/ 39

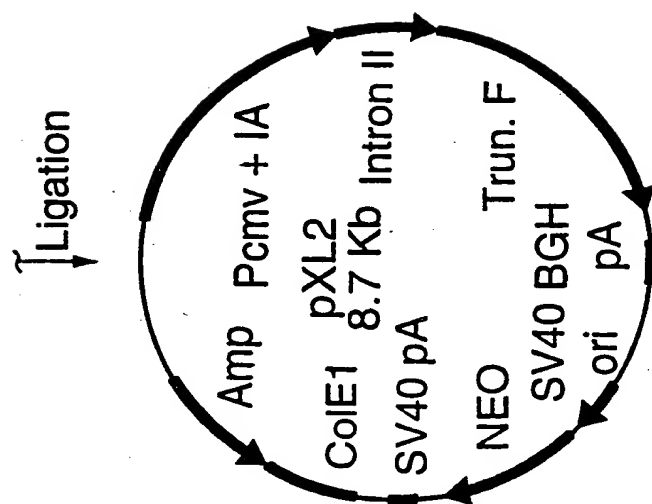


FIG.5D

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

19 / 39

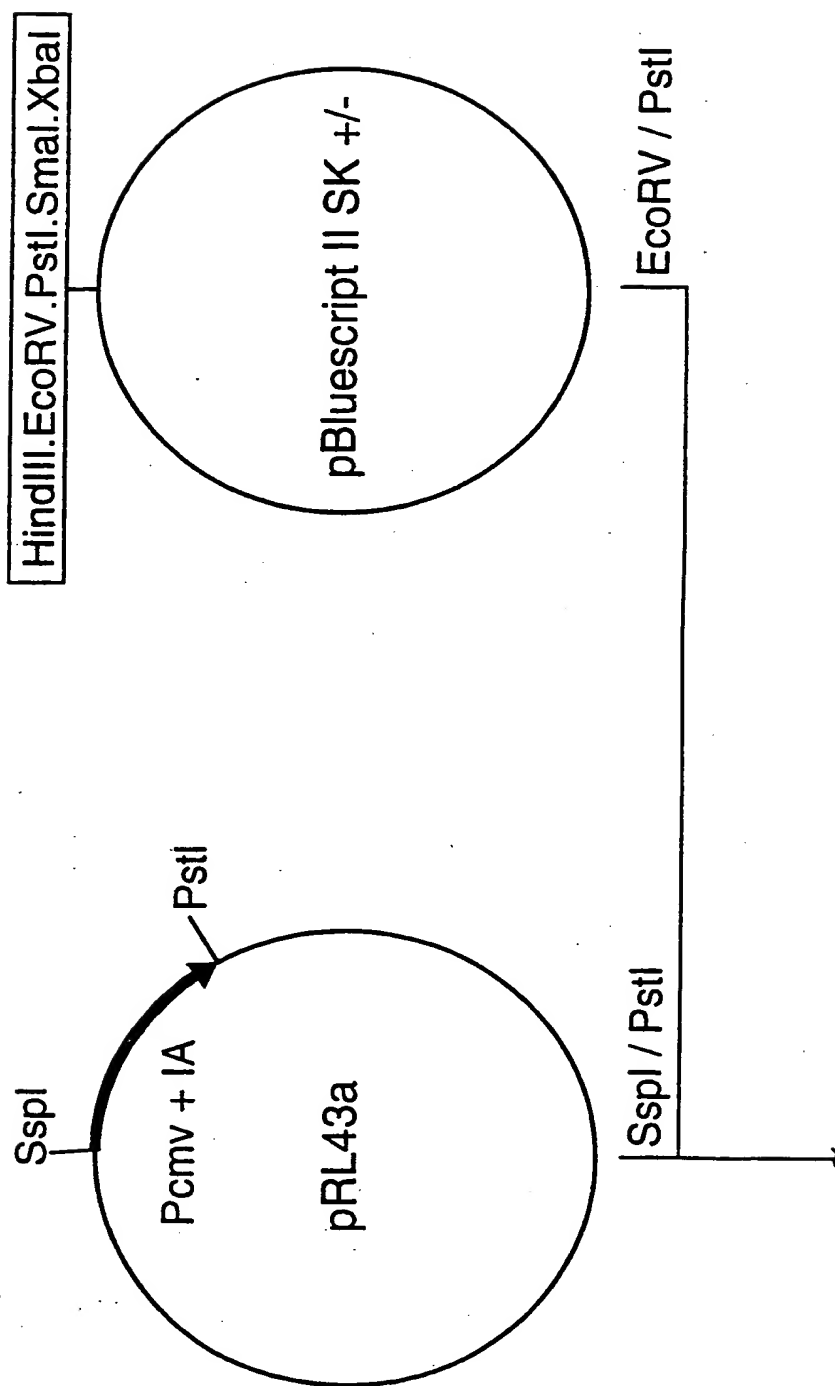


FIG.6A

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

20 / 39

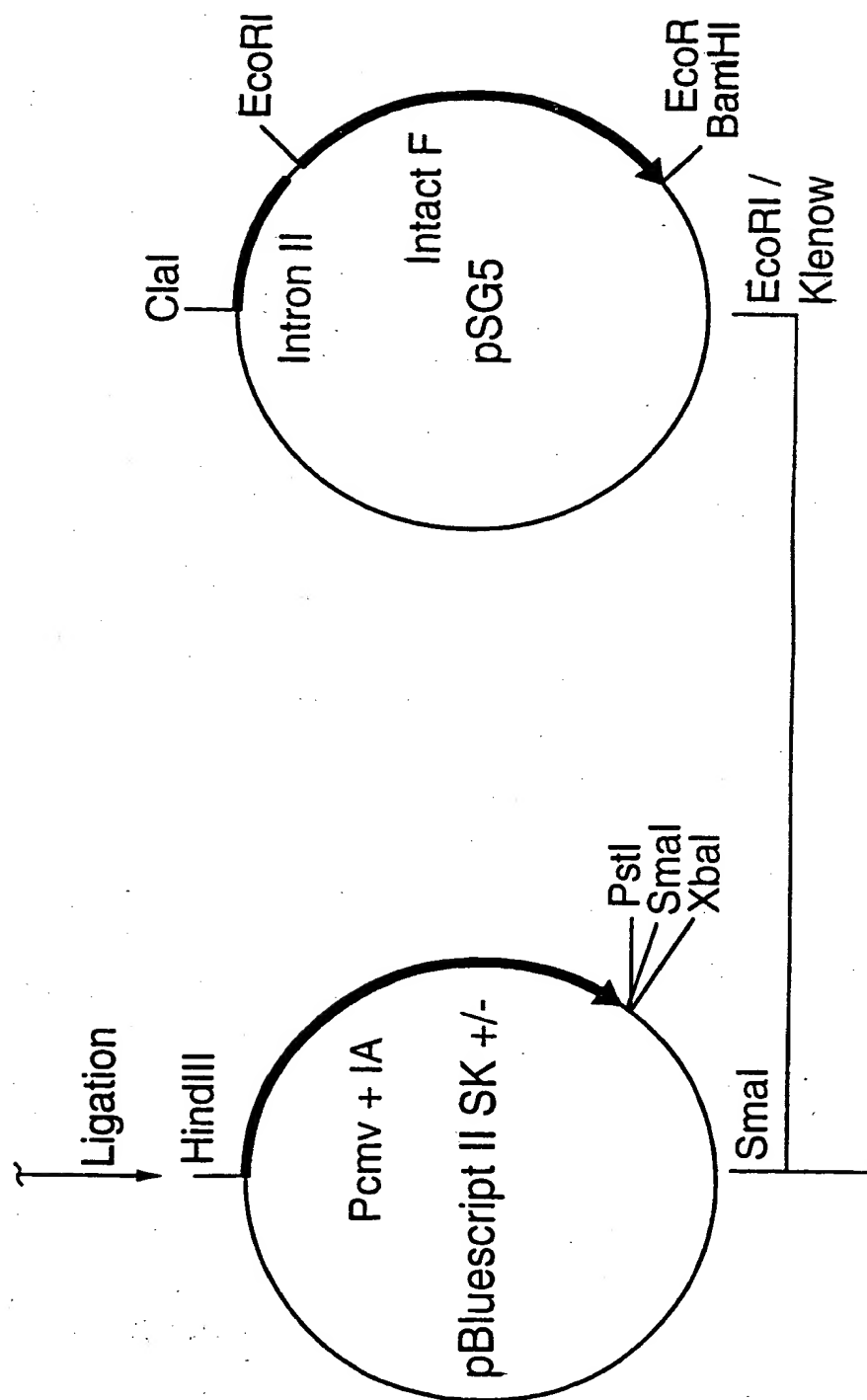


FIG.6B

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

21 / 39

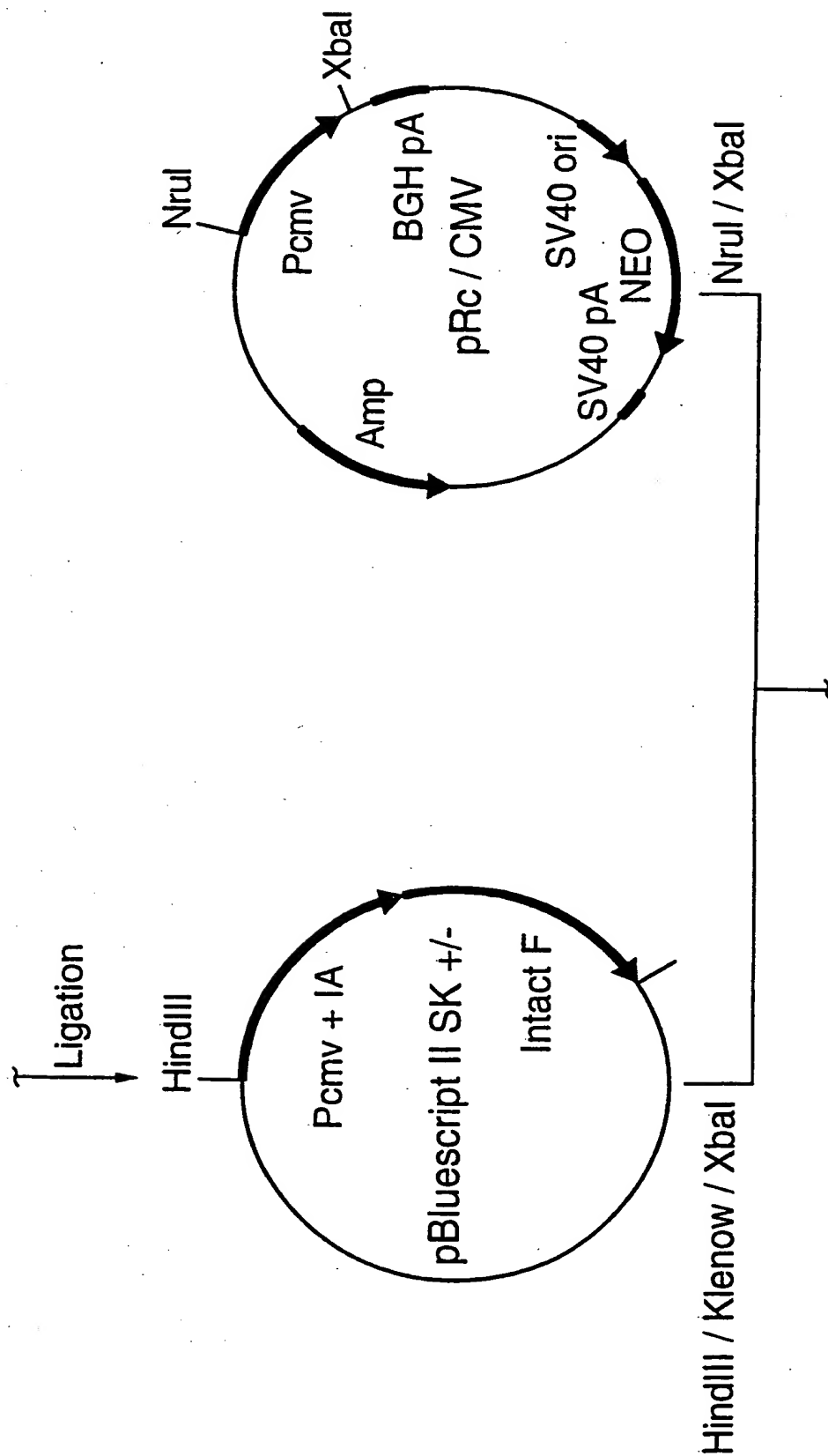


FIG.6C

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**



22/39

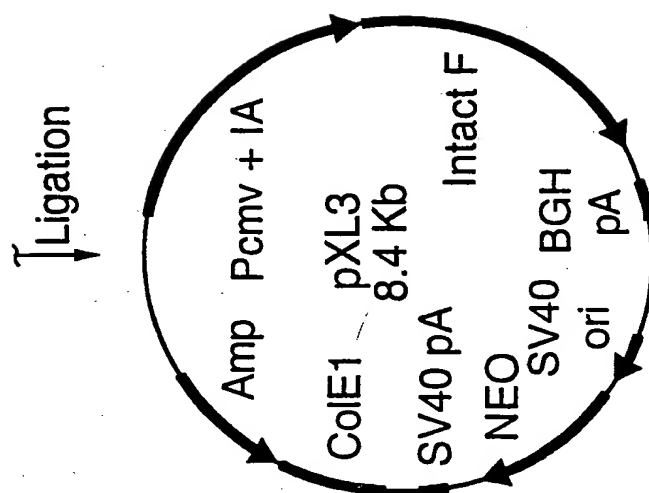


FIG.6D

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

23/39

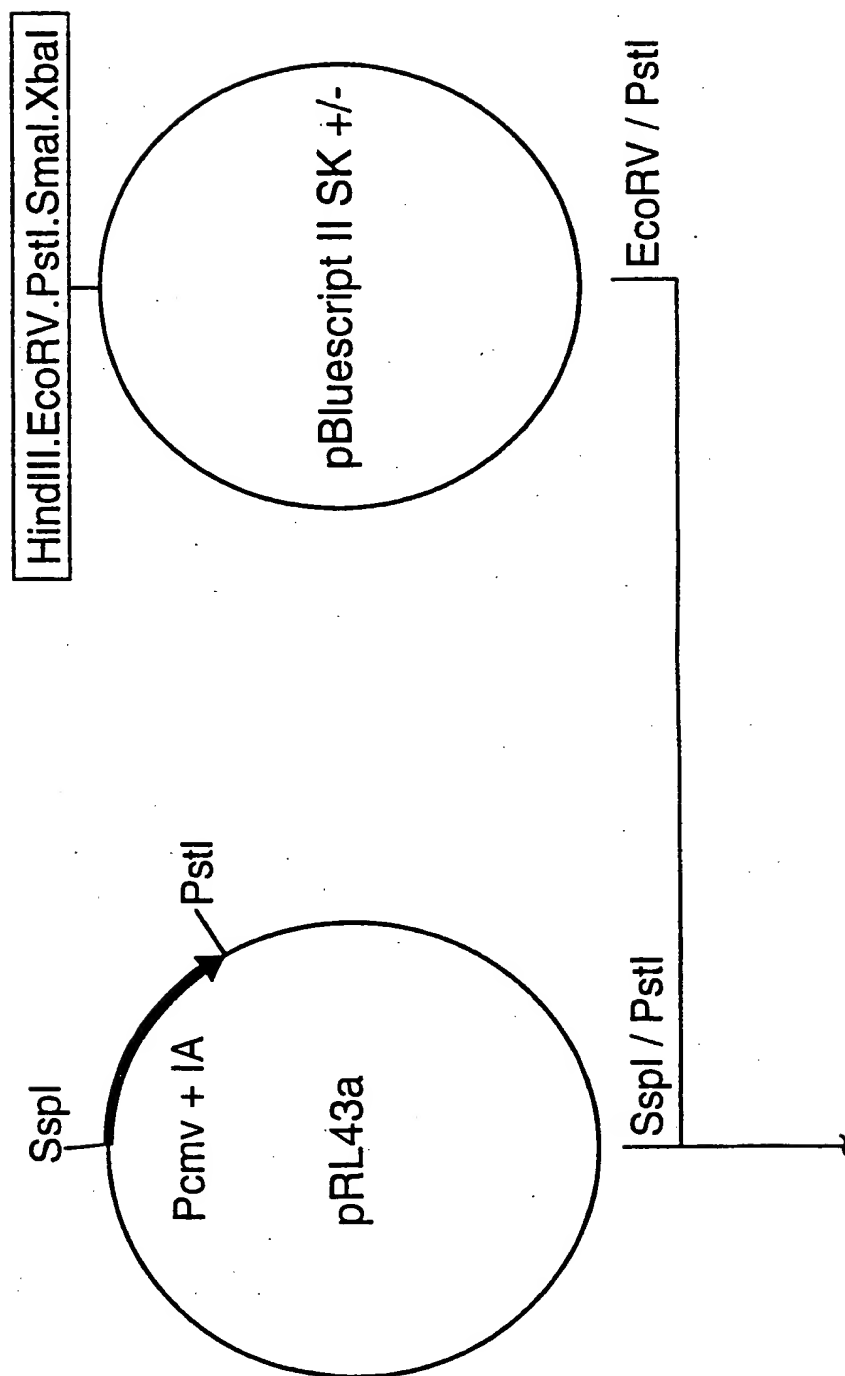


FIG.7A

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

24 / 39

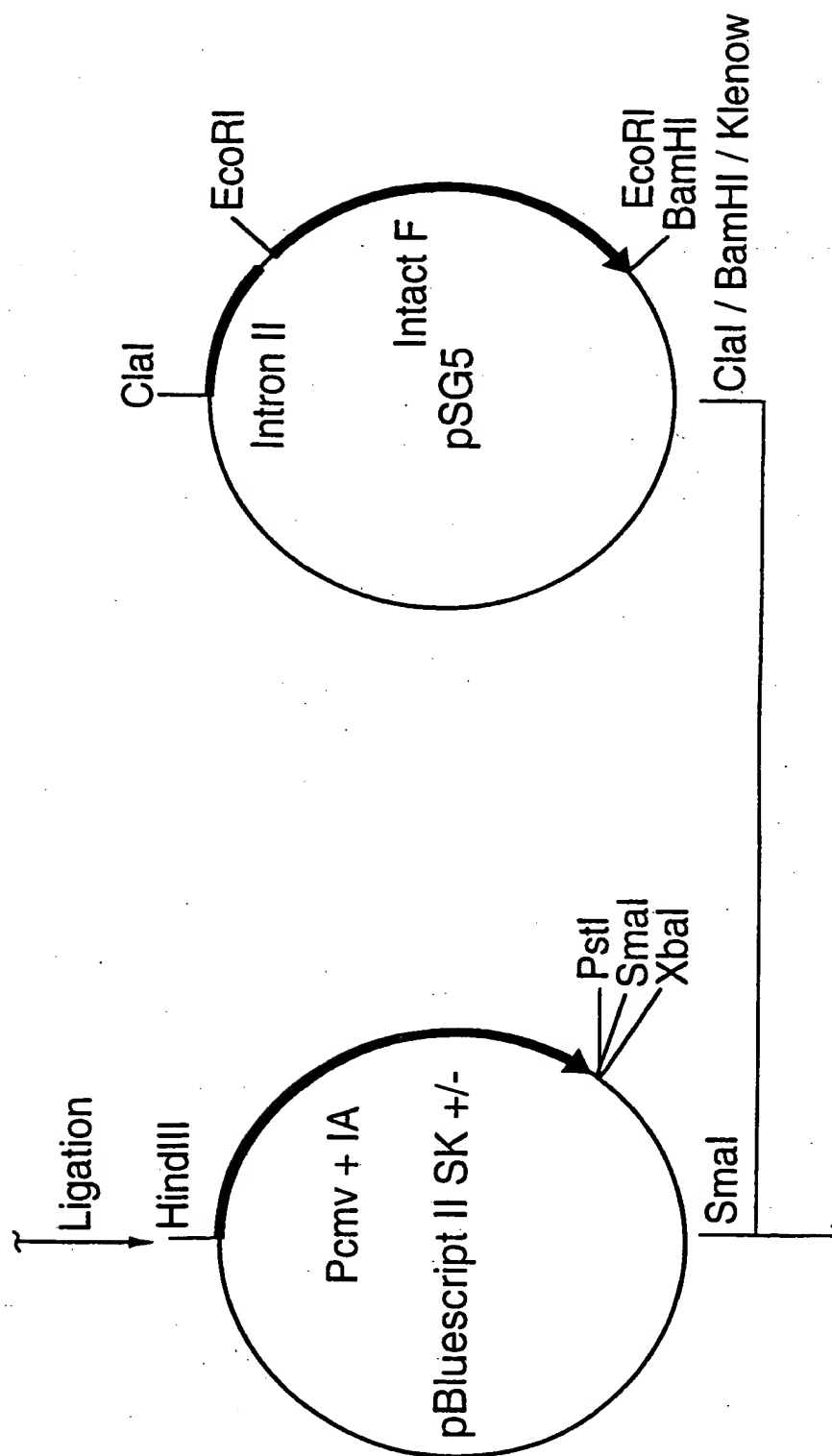


FIG.7B

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

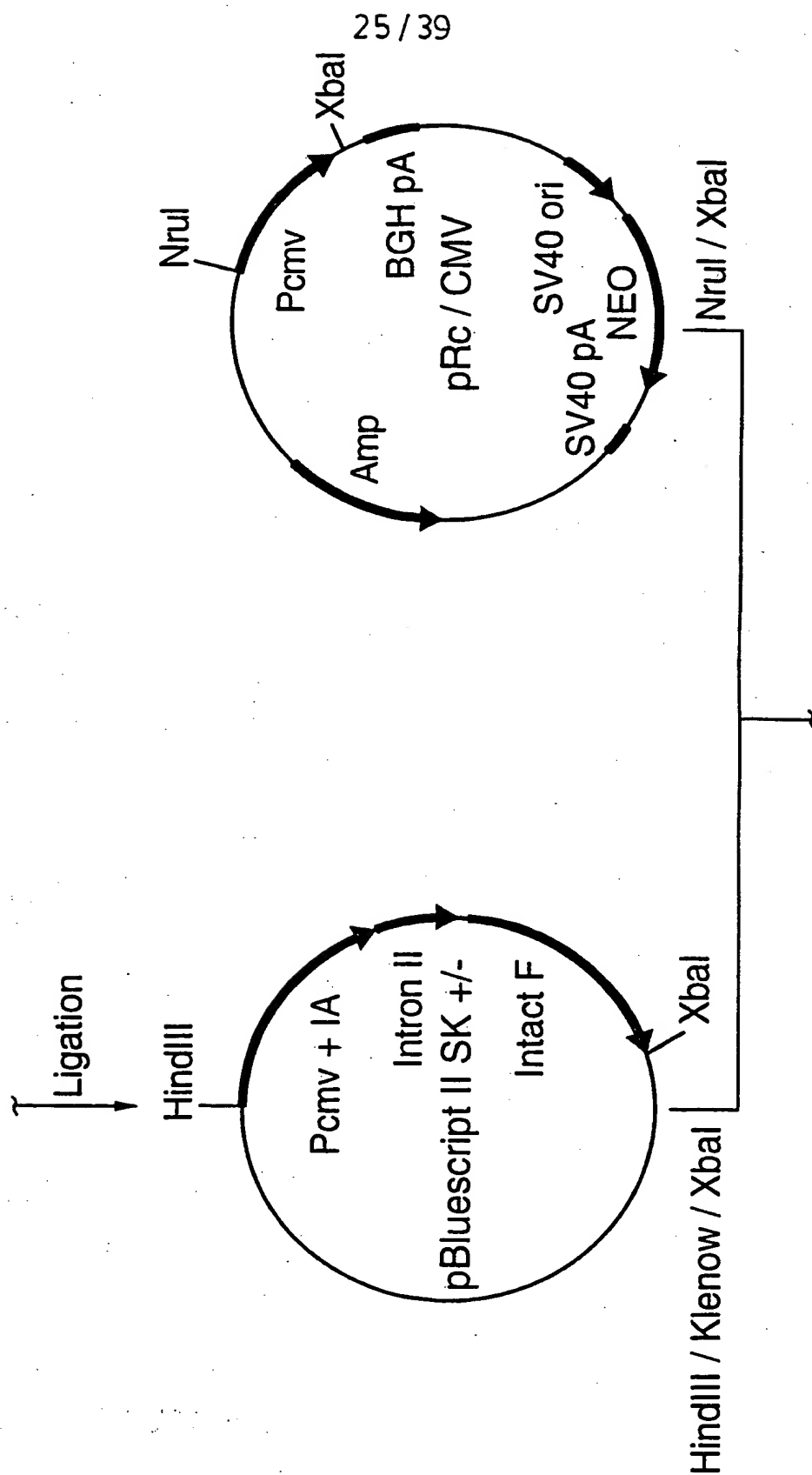


FIG.7C

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**



26/39

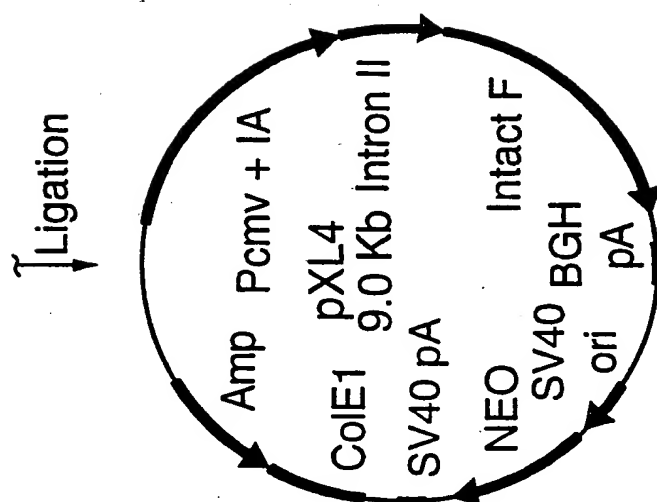


FIG.7D

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

27/39

FIG.8

GTGAGT  
401 TTGGGGACCC TTGATTGTTC TTTCTTTTTC GCTATTGTAA AATTCATGTT  
451 ATATGGAGGG GGCAAAGTTT TCAGGGTGTT GTTTAGAAATG GGAAGATGTC  
501 CCTTGATCA CCATGGACCC TCATGATAAT TTTGTTTCTT TCACTTTCTA  
551 CTCGTGTGAC AACCATTGTC TCCTCTTATT TTCTTTTCAT TTTCTGTAAC  
601 TTTTTCGTTA AACTTTAGCT TGCATTTGTA ACGAATTTT AAATTCACCT  
651 TTGTTTATT GTGAGATTGT AAGTACTTTC TCTAATCACT TTTTTTTCAA  
701 GGCAATCAGG GTATATTATA TTGTACTTCA GCACAGTTT AGAGAACAAT  
751 TGTATAATT AAATGATAAG GTAGAATATT TCTGCATATA AATCTGGCT  
801 GCGGTGAAA TATTCTTATT GGTAAGAAACA ACTACATCCT GGTCATCATC  
851 CTGCCTTTCT CTTATGGTT ACAATGATAT AACTGTGTTG AGATGAGGAT  
901 AAAATACTCT GAGTCCAAAC CGGGCCCCCTC TGCTAACCAT GTTCATGCCCT  
951 TCTTCTTTT CCTACAG

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

28/39

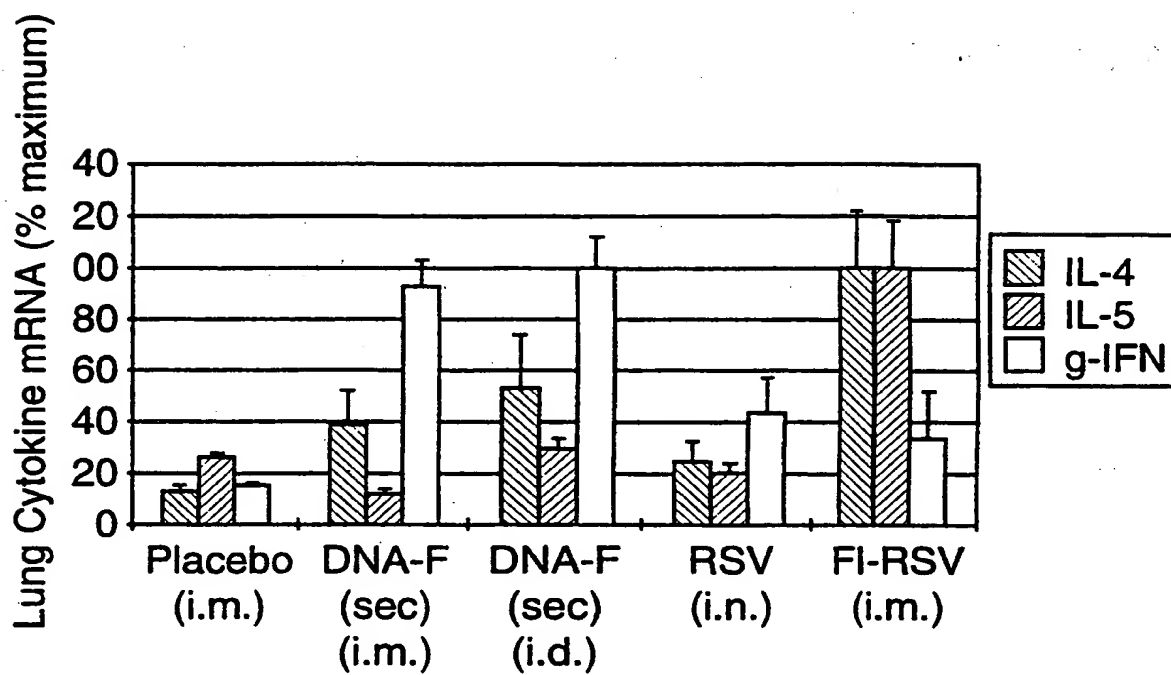


FIG.9

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

29/39

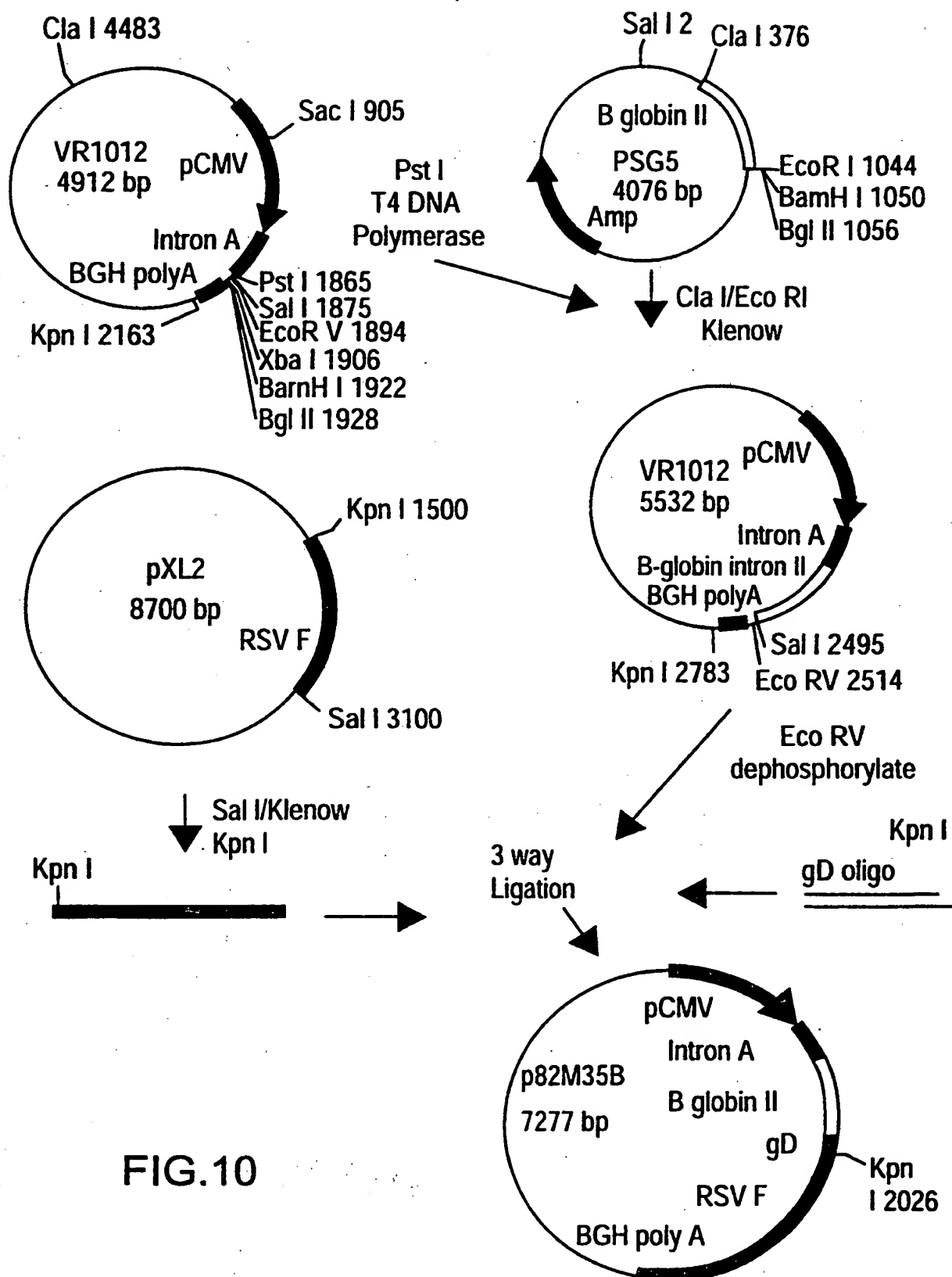


FIG.10

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)



## FIG.11A

Nucleotide Sequence of plasmid VR1012

10 20 30 40 50 60 70  
 TOGGGGGTTT CCGGATGAC GGCGAAACC TCTGACACAT GCAGCTCCG GAGACGGICA CAGCTTGICT

80 90 100 110 120 130 140  
 GTAAGCGCAT GCGCGGAGCA GACAAGCCG TCAGCGCGG TCAGCGGGIG TTGCGGGIG TCGGGCGCIGG

150 160 170 180 190 200 210  
 CTTAACTAIG CCGCATCAGA GCAGATTGTA CTGAGAGTGC ACCATAIGCG GIGCGAATA CCGCACACAT

220 230 240 250 260 270 280  
 GCGTAAGCAG AAAATACCGC ATCAGATTGG CTATTGGCCA TTGCATACGT TGATACATA TCATAATAIG

290 300 310 320 330 340 350  
 TACATTATA TGGCICATG TCAACATTA CCGCCATGTT GACATTGATT ATTGACIAGT TATTAAATAGT

360 370 380 390 400 410 420  
 AATCAATTAC GCGGICATTA GTTCATAGCC CATATAIGCA GTTCGGGTT ACATAACTTA CCGTAAATGG

430 440 450 460 470 480 490  
 CCGGCGCIGC TGACCGGCGA AGGACCCCGG CCGATTGACG TCAATAATCA CGTATGTTCC CATAGTAAAG

30 / 39

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

31/39

FIG.11B

500	510	520	530	540	550	560
CCAAATAGGGA	CTTTCCATIG	ACGICAAATGG	GTCGAGTATT	TACCGTAAC	TGCCCACTTG	GCAGTACATC
570	580	590	600	610	620	630
AAGIGTAACA	TATGCCAAGT	ACGCCCCCTA	TTGACGICAA	TGACGGTAAA	TGGCCCGGCT	GGCATTTATGC
640	650	660	670	680	690	700
CCAGTACATG	ACCTTAATGG	ACTTTCTAC	TTGGCAGTAC	ATCTAAGTAT	TAGTCATGCG	TATTACCATG
710	720	730	740	750	760	770
GICATGCCGT	TTTGGCAGTA	CATCAATGG	CGTGTATAGC	GGTTTGACIC	ACGGGATTT	CCAAGICTOC
780	790	800	810	820	830	840
ACCCCATTGA	CGTCAATGG	AGTTTGTITT	GGCACCAAA	TCAACGGAC	TTTCCAAAT	GTCGTAAACA
850	860	870	880	890	900	910
CTCCGCCCCA	TTGACGCAA	TGGGGGTAG	GGTGTATCG	TGGGAGGICT	ATATAAGCAG	AGCTCGTTTA
920	930	940	950	960	970	980
GTAACCGIC	AGATCGCCIG	GAGAGGCCAT	CCAGGCIGTT	TTGAOCCTCA	TAGAAGACAC	CCGGACCGAT
990	1000	1010	1020	1030	1040	1050
CCAGCCTCCG	CGCGCGGGA	CGGTGATIG	GAACGCCGAT	TCCCGTGCC	AACAGTGAAG	TAGTACCGC

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

32/39

FIG.11C

1060	1070	1080	1090	1100	1110	1120
CTATAGACTC	TATAGGCACA	CCCCCTTGGC	TCTTATGCGT	GCTATACIGT	TTTGGCTTG	GGGCTATAC
1130	1140	1150	1160	1170	1180	1190
ACCCCCGCTT	CCCTATGCTA	TAGGICATGG	TATAGCTTAG	CCATATAGGIG	TGGGTATTG	ACCATTTATG
1200	1210	1220	1230	1240	1250	1260
ACCACTCGCC	TATGGGIGAC	GATACCTTCC	ATTACTAATC	CATTAACATGG	CCTCTTGGCA	CAACTATCTC
1270	1280	1290	1300	1310	1320	1330
TATGGCTAT	ATGCCAATAC	TCCTGTCTTC	AGAGACTGAC	ACGGACTCTG	TATTTTACA	GGATGGGIC
1340	1350	1360	1370	1380	1390	1400
CCATTATTA	TTTACAAATT	CACATATACA	ACAACGGCGT	CCCCGGTCC	CGCAGTTTTT	ATTAAACATA
1410	1420	1430	1440	1450	1460	1470
GCGTGGGATC	TCCACGGCAA	TCCTGGGGTAC	GCTTCCGGA	CATGGCTCT	TCCTGGGTAG	CGGGGAGCT
1480	1490	1500	1510	1520	1530	1540
TCCACATCCG	AGCCCTGGIC	CCATGCCCTCC	AGGGCTCAT	GGTGGCTGG	CAGCTCTTG	CTCCTAACAG
1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600	1610
TGGAGGCCAG	ACTTAGGCAC	AGCACATGTC	CCACCAACCAC	CAGTGTGGC	CACATAGGCG	TGGGGTATAG

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

33/39

## FIG.11D

1620 1630 1640 1650 1660 1670 1680  
 GTATGIGTCT GAAATGAGC GGGAGATIG GGGTGGCAG GCTGAGCAG ATGGAAGACT TAAGGCAGCG  
  
 1690 1700 1710 1720 1730 1740 1750  
 GCACAAGAAG ATGCAGGCAG CIGAGHIGHT GTATTICIGAT AAGAGICAGA GGTAACIOCC GTTGGGGIGC  
  
 1760 1770 1780 1790 1800 1810 1820  
 TGTTAACGGT GAGAGGCAGT GTAGTICAG CAGTACTOGT TGGTGGCGG GGGGCCACCA GACATAATAG  
  
 1830 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890  
 CTGACAGACT AACAGACTGT TGCCTTCCAT GGGCTCTTTC TGCAGTCACC GTGGTGCACA CGGIGATCA  
  
 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960  
 GATATGGCGG CCGCTCTAGA CCAGGGCGCT GGATCCAGAT CIGCIGTCC TTCTAGTIGC CAGCCATCIG  
  
 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2020 2030  
 TTGTTTGCC CCCCCGGG CCTTCCITGA CCGCGAAGG TGCCTACTCC ACIGTCTTT CCTAATAAAA  
  
 2040 2050 2060 2070 2080 2090 2100  
 TGAGGAATT GCATGGCATT GCTGAGTAG GIGTCATTCT ATTCTGGCGG GTGGGGTGG GATAGGACAC  
  
 2110 2120 2130 2140 2150 2160 2170  
 AAGGGGAGG ATTGGGAAGA CAATAGCAGG CATGCTGGG ATGGGGTGG CTCTATGGT ACCCAGGIGC

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)



34/39

FIG.11E

2180	2190	2200	2210	2220	2230	2240
TGAAGATIG	ACCGGTTCC	TCCTGGGCA	GAAAGAACA	GGACATCC	CTTCTCTIG	ACACACCCIG
2250	2260	2270	2280	2290	2300	2310
TCACGCCCC	TGGTTCITAG	TTCCAGCCC	ACTCATAGCA	CACICATAGC	TCAGGAGGC	TCGGCCTTCA
2320	2330	2340	2350	2360	2370	2380
ATCCACCCG	CTAAAGTACT	TGGAGCGGTC	TCTCCCTCC	TCATCAGCC	ACCAACCAA	ACCTAGCCTC
2390	2400	2410	2420	2430	2440	2450
CAAGAGICGG	AAGAATTA	AGCAAGATAG	GCTATTAACT	GCAGGCGAG	AGAAATGCC	TCCAACATGT
2460	2470	2480	2490	2500	2510	2520
GAGGAAGTAA	TCAGAGAAAT	CATAGAAATT	CTTCCGCTTC	CTCCCTACT	GACICGCTGC	GCICGGTGGT
2530	2540	2550	2560	2570	2580	2590
TCGGCTGGG	CCAGCGGTAT	CAGCTCCTC	AAAGCGGTA	ATAAGGTAT	CCACAGATC	AGCGGATAAC
2600	2610	2620	2630	2640	2650	2660
GCAGGAAGA	ACATGTCAGC	AAAGGCCAG	CAAAGGCCA	GGAACGTAA	AAAGCGCGG	TTCCIGGGT
2670	2680	2690	2700	2710	2720	2730
TTTTCATAG	GCCTCGCCCC	CCAGCAGAGC	ATCACAATA	TGACGCTCA	AGTCAGAGT	GGCGAACC

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

35 / 39

## FIG.11F

2740 2750 2760 2770 2780 2790 2800  
 GACAGGACTA TAAAGATACC AGGCGTTTCC CCTCGGAAGC TCCCTCGTGC GCCTCTCCGT TCCGACCCCTG  
  
 2810 2820 2830 2840 2850 2860 2870  
 CCGCTTACCG GATAACCIGTC CGCCTTTCTC CCTTCGGGAA GCGTGGGCT TTCTCATAGC TCACGCCTGTA  
  
 2880 2890 2900 2910 2920 2930 2940  
 GGTATCTCAG TCCGGTGTAG GTGGTTGGCT CCAGGCTGGG CTGTGTGGAC GAACCCCCCG TTATGCCCCGA  
  
 2950 2960 2970 2980 2990 3000 3010  
 CCGCTGGGCC TTATCCGGTA ACTATCGTCT TGAGTCCAC CCGGTAAAGC AGGACTTATC GGCACCTGGCA  
  
 3020 3030 3040 3050 3060 3070 3080  
 GCAGCCACTG GTAAACAGGAT TAGCAGAGCG AGGTATGTAG GCGGTGCTAC AGAGTCTTTC AAGTGGTGGC  
  
 3090 3100 3110 3120 3130 3140 3150  
 CTAACTACCG CTACACTAGA ACAAACAGTAT TTGGTATCTG CGCTCTCTCTG AAGCCAGTTA CCTTCGGAAA  
  
 3160 3170 3180 3190 3200 3210 3220  
 AAGAGTTCGT AGCTCTTTCAT CCGGCAAAACA AACCAACCGCT GGTAGCGGTG GTTTTTTGT TTGCAAGCAG  
  
 3230 3240 3250 3260 3270 3280 3290  
 CAGATTACCG GCAGAAAAAA AGGATCTCAA GAAGATCCTT TGATCTTTTC TAGCGGGTCT GACGCTCAGT

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

36/39

## FIG.11G

3300 3310 3320 3330 3340 3350 3360  
GGAACGAAA CTCACGTTAA GGCATTGIG TCAATGCAAT ATCAAAAAGG ATCTTCACT AGATCTTTT

3370 3380 3390 3400 3410 3420 3430  
AAATTAAAA TGAAGTTTA ATCAATCTA AAGTATATAT GAGTAAACTT GGTCIGACAG TTACCAATGC

3440 3450 3460 3470 3480 3490 3500  
TTAATCAGIG AGGCACTTAT CTCAGCGATC TGCTATTTC GTTCATCCAT AGTTCCTGA CTGGGGGGG

3510 3520 3530 3540 3550 3560 3570  
GGGGGGCTG AGGTCGCTT CGTCAACAAG GGTTCCTCA CTCATACCAG GCTTGAATCG CCCATCATC

3580 3590 3600 3610 3620 3630 3640  
CAGCCAGAAA GTCAGGGAGC CACGGTTCAT GAGAGCTTIG TTGTAGGIGG ACCAGTTCGT GATTTGAAC

3650 3660 3670 3680 3690 3700 3710  
TTTTCCTTIG CCACGGAAG GTCGCGTIG TCGGGAAGAT GGGTATCTG ATCTTCAAC TCAGCAAAAG

3720 3730 3740 3750 3760 3770 3780  
TTCCATTAT TCAACAAGC CGCGGCGCG TCAAGTCAGC GTAATGCTCT GCGAGTGTTA CAACCAATTA

3790 3800 3810 3820 3830 3840 3850  
ACCAATTGIG ATTAGAAAA CTCATCGAGC ATCAAAATGA ACTCCATTT ATTATATCA GGAATTATCA

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

37/39

## FIG.11H

3860 3870 3880 3890 3900 3910 3920  
TACCATATTT TTGAAAAGC CGTTTCTGTA ATGAAGGACA AAATCTACCG AGCGAGTTC ATAGGATGGC

3930 3940 3950 3960 3970 3980 3990  
AAGATCTCTG TATCGGCTCG CCAATTCGAC TGGTCCAACA TCAATACAAC CTAATTAATTT CCCCCTGGCA

4000 4010 4020 4030 4040 4050 4060  
AAAATAAGGT TATCAAGTGA GAAATCACCA TGAGTGACCA CCGAATCCCG TGAGAATGGC AAAAGCTTAT

4070 4080 4090 4100 4110 4120 4130  
GCATTTCTTT CCAGACTTGT TCAACAGGCC AGCCATTAGG CTGGTATCA AAATCTACTCG CATCAACCAA

4140 4150 4160 4170 4180 4190 4200  
ACCGTTATTC ATTCTGATTT GCGCCCTGAGC GAGACGAAT ACGGATCGC TGTATAAAGG ACAATTACAA

4210 4220 4230 4240 4250 4260 4270  
ACAGGAATCG AATGCAACCG GCGCAGGAAC ACTGGCAGCG CATCAACAAT ATTTTCACTT CAATCAGGAT

4280 4290 4300 4310 4320 4330 4340  
ATTCTTCTAA TACCIGGAAT GCIGTTTTC CCGGGATCGC AGTGGTCACT AACCATGCAAT CATCAGGAGT

4350 4360 4370 4380 4390 4400 4410  
ACCGATAAAA TGCTTGATGG TCGGAAGAGG CATAAATTC GTCAGCCAGT TTAGTCTGAC CATCTCATCT

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)



FIG.11I

4420 4430 4440 4450 4460 4470 4480  
 GTAACATCAT TGGCAAGCT ACCTTGGCA TGTTTCAGAA ACAACICIGG CGCATCGGC TTCCCATACA  
  
 4490 4500 4510 4520 4530 4540 4550  
 ATCGATAGAT TGTCGCACCT GATTGCGCGA CATTATCGCG AGCCCATTTA TACCCATATA AATCAGCATC  
  
 4560 4570 4580 4590 4600 4610 4620  
 CATGTTGGAA TTTAATCGG GCCTCGAGCA ACAAGTTTC CGTTCAATAT GGCATATAAC GTTCCTTGTA  
  
 4630 4640 4650 4660 4670 4680 4690  
 TTACIGTTTA TGTAAGCAGA CAGTTTATT GTTCATCATG ATATATTTTT ATCTTGTGCA ATGTAACATC  
 38/39  
  
 4700 4710 4720 4730 4740 4750 4760  
 AGAGATTTTG AGACACAAG TGGCTTCC CCCCCCCC TTATTCAGC ATTATCAGG GTTATGTCT  
  
 4770 4780 4790 4800 4810 4820 4830  
 CATGAGCGGA TACATATTIG AATGATTTA GAAAAATAA CAAATAGGG TTCCGCGCAC ATTTCGCCA  
  
 4840 4850 4860 4870 4880 4890 4900  
 AAGIGGCCAC CTGACGCTA AGAAACCAT ATTATCATGA CATTAACCTA TAAAAATAGG CGTATCACGA  
  
 4910  
 GGGCCTTTC TC

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

FIG. 12

39/39

5'AAG CTT CAG GAA CGA CCA ACT ACC CCG ATC ATC AGT TAT CCT  
TAA GGT CTC TTT TGT GTG GTG CGT TCC GGT ATG GGG GGG ACT GCC  
GCC AGG TTG GGG GCC GTG ATT TTG TTT GTC GTC ATA GTG GGC CTC  
Ala Arg Leu Gly Ala Val Ile Leu Phe Val Val Ile Val Gly Leu  
CAT GGG GTC CGC GGC AAA TAT GCC TTG GCG GAT GCC TCT CTC 3'  
His Gly Val Arg Gly Lys Tyr Ala Leu Ala Asp Ala Ser Leu

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

## RESTRICTION MAP OF THE RSV F GENE

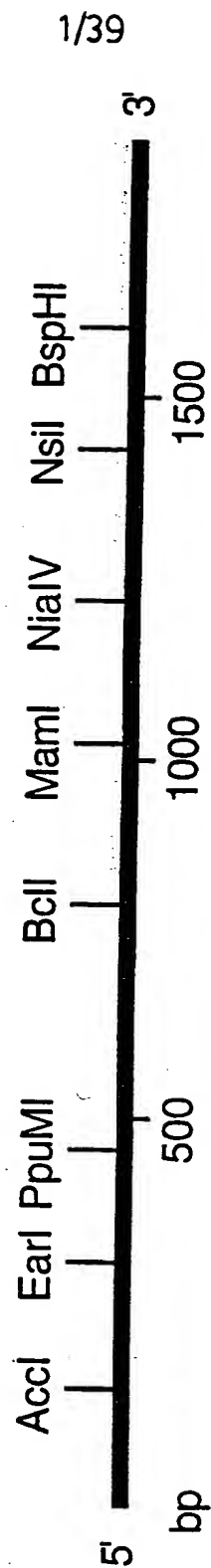


FIG.1

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

2/39

FIG.2A.

NUCLEOTIDE SEQUENCE OF THE RSV F GENE.

5' ← SP →

MET GLU LEU PRO ILE LEU LYS ALA ASN ALA ILE THR THR ILE LEU ALA VAL THR PHE  
 ATGGAGTTGCCAATCCTCAAAGCAAATGCAATTACCAACAATCCTCGTCGAGTCACATTT  
 TACCTCAACGGTTAGGAGTTTCGTTTACGTTAATGGTGTAGGAGCGACGTCAGTGTA  
 10 20 30 40 50 60

CYS PHE ALA SER SER GLN ASN ILE THR GLU GLU PHE TYR GLN SER THR CYS SER ALA VAL  
 TGCTTTGCTTCTAGTCAAAACATCACTGAAGAATTTTATCAATCAACATGCAGTGCAGTT  
 ACGAAACGAAGATCAGTTTGTAGTGACTTCTTAAATAAGTTAGTTGTACGTACGTCACTCA  
 70 80 90 100 110 120

SER LYS GLY TYR LEU SER ALA LEU ARG THR GLY TRP TYR THR SER VAL ILE THR ILE GLU  
 AGCAAAGGCTATCTTAGTGCTCTAAGAACTGGTTGGTATAGTGTATATAACTATAGAA  
 TCGTTCCGATAGAATCAGGAGATTCTTGACCAACCATATGATCACAATATTGATATCTT  
 130 140 150 160 170 180

LEU SER ASN ILE LYS GLU ASN LYS CYS ASN GLY THR ASP ALA LYS VAL LYS LEU MET LYS  
 TTAAGTAATATCAAGGAAATAAGTGTAATGGAACAGATGCTAAGGTAAATTTGATGAAA  
 AATTCAATTATAGTTCCCTTTTATTCACATTACCTTGCTACGATTCCATTTTAACTACTTT  
 190 200 210 220 230 240

GLN GLU LEU ASP LYS TYR LYS ASN ALA VAL THR GLU LEU GLN LEU MET GLN SER THR  
 CAAGAATTAGATAAATAAATAATGCTGTACAGAAATGCAAGTTGCTCATGCAAGCACA  
 GTTCTTAATCTATTATATATTTTACGACATGTCTTAAACGTCAACGAGTACGTTTCGTGT  
 250 260 270 280 290 300

PRO ALA ALA ASN ASN ARG ALA ARG ARG GLU LEU PRO ARG PHE MET ASN TYR THR LEU ASN  
 CCAGCAGCAACAATCGAGCCAGAGAACTACCAAGGTTTATGAATTATACACTCAAC  
 GGTCGTCGTTTGTAGCTCGGTCTTCTTGTATGGTTCCAAATACTTAATATGTGAGTTG  
 310 320 330 340 350 360

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**



3/39

## FIG.2B.

F2-F1CLEAVAGE SITE

ASN THR LYS LYS THR ASN VAL THR LEU SER LYS LYS ARG LYS ARG ARG PHE LEU GLY PHE  
 AATACCAAAAACCAATGTAACATTAAGCAAGAAAGGAAA8AAGATTTC TTGGTTT  
 TTATGGTTTTTTTGGTTACATTGTAATTTCGTTCTTTTCTTTCTTAAAGAACCAAAA  
 370 380 390 400 410 420

LEU LEU GLY VAL GLY SER ALA ILE ALA SER GLY ILE ALA VAL SER LYS VAL LEU HIS LEU  
 TTGTTAGGTGTTGGATCTGCAATCGCCAGTGGCATTTGCTGTATCTAAGTCTCGCACTTA  
 AACAATCCACAACCTAGACGTTAGCGGTACCCGTAACGACATAGATTCCAGGACGTGAAT  
 430 440 450 460 470 480

GLU GLY GLU VAL ASN LYS ILE LYS SER ALA LEU SER THR ASN LYS ALA VAL VAL SER  
 GAAGGAGAAGTGAACAAGATCAAAAGTGTCTACTATCCACAACAAGCCGTAGTCAGC  
 CTTCCCTCTTCACTTGTTC TAGTTTTCACGAGATGATAGGTGTTTGTTCGGCATCAGTCG  
 490 500 510 520 530 540

LEU SER ASN GLY VAL SER VAL LEU THR SER LYS VAL LEU ASP LEU LYS ASN TYR ILE ASP  
 TTATCAAAATGGAGTTAGTGTCTTAAACCAGCAAGTGTTAGACCTCAAAAACATATATAGAT  
 AATAGTTTACCTCAATCACAGAAATTGGTCGTTTCACAATCTGGAGTTTGTGATATATCTA  
 550 560 570 580 590 600

LYS GLN LEU LEU PRO ILE VAL ASN LYS GLN SER CYS ARG ILE SER ASN ILE GLU THR VAL  
 AAACAATTGTTACCTATTGTGAATAAGCAAGCTGCAGAATATCAAAATATAGAAACTGTG  
 TTTGTTAAACAATGGATAACACTTATTTCGTTTCGACGCTTATAGTTTATATCTTTTGACAC  
 610 620 630 640 650 660

ILE GLU PHE GLN HIS LYS ASN ASN ARG LEU LEU GLU ILE THR ARG GLU PHE SER VAL ASN  
 ATAGAGTTCCAACAAGAAACAACAGACTACTAGAGATTACCAGGGAATTTAGTGTTAAT  
 TATCTCAAGGTGTTTCTTTGTTGTCGTGATGATCTCTAATGGTCCCTTAAATCACAATTA  
 670 680 690 700 710 720

ALA GLY VAL THR THR PRO VAL SER THR TYR MET LEU THR ASN SER GLU LEU LEU SER LEU  
 GCAGGTGTAAC TACACCTGTAAAGCACTTACATGTTAACTAATAGTGAATTATTGTTCATTA  
 CGTCCACATTGATGTGGACATTTCGTGAATGTACAATTGATTATCATTAAATAACAGTAAT  
 730 740 750 760 770 780

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

4/39

## FIG.2C.

```

ILE ASN ASP MET PRO ILE THR ASN ASP GLN LYS LYS LEU MET SER ASN VAL GLN ILE
ATCAATGATATGCCCTATAACAATGATCAGAAAAGTTAATGTCCAACAATGTTCAAATA
TAGTTACTATACGGGATATTGTTTACTAGTCTTTTCAATTACAGGTTGTTACAAGTTTAT
790      800      810      820      830      840

VAL ARG GLN GLN SER TYR SER ILE MET SER ILE ILE LYS GLU GLU VAL LEU ALA TYR VAL
GTTAGACAGCAAGTTACTCTATCATGTCCATAATAAAGAGGAGGAGTCTTAGCATATGTA
CAATCTGTCGTTTCAATGAGATAGTACAGGTATTATTCTCTCCTTCAGAAATCGTATACAT
850      860      870      880      890      900

VAL GLN LEU PRO LEU TYR GLY VAL ILE ASP THR PRO CYS TRP LYS LEU HIS THR SER PRO
GTACAATTACCACCTATATGGTGTGATAGATACACCTTGTGGAATTACACACATCCCCCT
CATGTTAATGGTGATATACCACACTATCTATGTGGAACAACCTTTAATGTGTGTAGGGGA
910      920      930      940      950      960

LEU CYS THR THR ASN THR LYS GLU GLY SER ASN ILE CYS LEU THR ARG THR ASP ARG GLY
CTATGTACAACCAACAAGAGGGTCAACATCTGTTTAACAAGAAGTGAACATGTACAGAGGA
GATACATGTTGGTTGTGTTTCTTCCAGTTTGTAGACAAAATTGTTCTTGACTGTCTCCT
970      980      990      1000      1010      1020

TRP TYR CYS ASP ASN ALA GLY SER VAL SER PHE PRO GLN ALA GLU THR CYS LYS VAL
TGGTACTGTGACAAATGCAGATCAGTATCTTTCTTCCACAAGCTGAACATGTAAAGTT
ACCATGACACTGTTACGTCTTAGTCATAGAAAGAGGTTGCTGACTTTGTACATTTTCAA
1030      1040      1050      1060      1070      1080

GLN SER ASN ARG VAL PHE CYS ASP THR MET ASN SER LEU THR LEU PRO SER GLU VAL ASN
CAATCGAATCGAGTATTTGTGACACAATGAACAGTTTAAACATTACCAGTGAAGTAAAT
GTTAGCTTAGCTCATATAAACACTGTGTACTTGTCAAAATTGTAATGGTTCACTTCATTTA
1090      1100      1110      1120      1130      1140

LEU CYS ASN VAL ASP ILE PHE ASN PRO LYS TYR ASP CYS LYS ILE MET THR SER LYS THR
CTCTGCAATGTTGACATATTCAATCCCAAATATGATGTAAATTTATGACTTCAAAAACA
GAGACGTTACAACTGTATAAGTTAGGGTTTATATACTAACATTTTAAATACTGAAGTTTGT
1150      1160      1170      1180      1190      1200

```

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**

ASP VAL SER SER VAL ILE THR SER LEU GLY ALA ILE VAL SER CYS TYR GLY LYS THR  
 GATGTAAGCAGCTCCGTTATCATCTCTAGGAGCCCATTTGTGTCTATGCTATGGCAAAACT  
 CTACATTCGTCGAGGCAATAGTGTAGAGATCCCTCGGTAACACAGTACGATACCGTTTGA  
 1210 1220 1230 1240 1250 1260

LYS CYS THR ALA SER ASN LYS ASN ARG GLY ILE ILE LYS THR PHE SER ASN GLY CYS ASP  
 AAATGTACAGCATCCCAATAAATAATCGTGGAATCATATAAGACATTTTCTAAACGGGTGTGAT  
 TTTACATGTGTCGTAGGTTATTTTAGCACCTTAGTATTTCTGTAAAGATTGCCCACTA  
 1270 1280 1290 1300 1310 1320

TYR VAL SER ASN LYS GLY VAL ASP THR VAL SER VAL GLY ASN THR LEU TYR TYR VAL ASN  
 TATGTATCAATAAAGGGGTGGACACTGTGTCTGTAGGTAAACACATTTATTTATGTAAAT  
 ATACATAGTTTATTTCCCCACCTGTGACACACATCCCATTTGTGTAAATAATACATTTA  
 1330 1340 1350 1360 1370 1380

LYS GLN GLU GLY LYS SER LEU TYR VAL LYS GLY GLU PRO ILE ILE ASN PHE TYR ASP PRO  
 AAGCAAGAAAGGC AAAAGTCTCTATGTATAAAGGTGAACCAATAATAAATTTCTATGACCCCA  
 TTCGTTCTTCCGTTTTCAGAGATACATTTTCCCACTTGCTTATTTAAAGATACTGGGT  
 1390 1400 1410 1420 1430 1440

LEU VAL PHE PRO SER ASP GLU PHE ASP ALA SER ILE SER GLN VAL ASN GLU LYS ILE ASN  
 TTAGTATTCCCCCTCTGTGATGAATTTTGATGCAATCAATATCTCAAGTCAATGAGAGATTAAAC  
 AATCATAGGGGAGACTACTTAACTACCGTAGTTATAGAGTTTCAGTTACTCTTCTAAATTG  
 1450 1460 1470 1480 1490 1500

GLN SER LEU ALA PHE ILE ARG LYS SER ASP GLU LEU LEU HIS ASN VAL ASN ALA GLY LYS  
 CAGAGTTTAGCATTTATTCGTAAATCCGATGAATTTATTAACATAATGTAAATGCTGGTAAA  
 GTCTCAAAATCGTAAATAAGCAATTTAGGCTACTTAATAATGTATTACATTTACGACCATTT  
 1510 1520 1530 1540 1550 1560

SER THR THR ASN ILE MET ILE THR THR ILE ILE GLU ILE ILE VAL ILE LEU LEU SER  
 TCAACCAACAATAATCATGATAACTACTATAATTAAGAGATTATAGTAATAATTGTTATCA  
 AGT TGGTGTTTATAGTACTATTGATGATTAATAATCTCTAATATCATTAACAATAGT  
 1570 1580 1590 1600 1610 1620

FIG.2D.

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

LEU ILE ALA VAL GLY LEU LEU TYR CYS LYS ALA ARG SER THR PRO VAL THR LEU SER  
 TTAATTGCTGTTGGACTGCTCCCTATACCTGTAAGGCCAGAACACACACAGTCACACTAAGC  
 AATTAAACGACAACTGACCGAGGATATGACATTCCGGTCTTCGTGTCAGTGATTCG 1680  
 1630 1650 1670  
 LYS, ASP GLN LEU SER GLY ILE ASN ASN ILE ALA PHE SER ASN  
 AAGGATCAACTGAGTGGTATAATAATAATTGCAATTTAGTAACCTGAATAAATAAGCACCTT  
 TTCCTAGTTGACTCACCATATTTATTAATAACGTAAATCATTTGACTTATTTTATCCTGTTGGA 1740  
 1690 1700 1710 1720 1730  
 AATCATGTTCTTACAATGGTTTACTATCTGCTCATAGACAACCCATCTATCATTTGGATTT  
 TTAGTACAAGAAATGTTACCAAAATGATAGACGAGTATCTGTTGGGTAGATAGTAACCTAAA 1800  
 1750 1760 1770 1780 1790  
 TCTTAAAACTCTGAACCTTCATCGAAACTCTTATCTATATAAACCATCTCAGTTACACTATTTA  
 AGAAATTTAGACTTGAAGTAGCTTTTGAGAAATAGATATTTTGGTAGAGTGAAATGTGATAAAT 1860  
 1810 1820 1830 1840 1850  
 AGTAGATTTCCTAGTTTATAGTTATAT 3'  
 TCATCTAAGGATCAAAATATCAATATA 1880  
 1870

6/39

NUCLEOTIDE SEQUENCE OF THE RSV F GENE. THE cDNA SEQUENCE IS SHOWN IN THE PLUS (mRNA)  
 STRAND SENSE IN THE 5' TO 3' DIRECTION. THE SIGNAL PEPTIDE (SP) AND THE TRANSMEMBRANE (TM)  
 ANCHOR DOMAIN ARE UNDERLINED. THE PREDICTED F2-F1 CLEAVAGE SITE IS INDICATED BY THE ARROW  
 (↓).

FIG. 2e

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**



FIG. 3A.

NUCLEOTIDE SEQUENCE OF THE RSV F GENE.

5' 7/39

← SP →

MET GLU LEU PRO ILE LEU LYS ALA ASN ALA ILE THR THR ILE LEU ALA VAL THR PHE  
 ATGGAGTTGCCAATCCTCAAAGCAAATGCAATTACCACAAATCCTCGCTGCAGTCACATTT  
 TACCTCAACGGTTAGGAGTTTCGTTTACGTTAATGGTGTAGGAGCGACGTCAGTGTAAA 60  
 10 20 30 40 50

CYS PHE ALA SER SER GLN ASN ILE THR GLU GLU PHE TYR GLN SER THR CYS SER ALA VAL  
 TGCTTTGCTTCTAGTCAAAACATCACTGAAGAAATTTTATCAATCAACATGCAGTGCAGTT  
 ACGAAACGAAGATCAGTTTGTAGTGACTTCTTAAATAAGTTAGTTGTACGTCACGTCAA 120  
 70 80 90 100 110

SER LYS GLY TYR LEU SER ALA LEU ARG THR GLY TRP TYR THR SER VAL ILE THR ILE GLU  
 AGCAAAGGCTATCTTAGTGCTCTAAGAACTGGTTGGTATACTAGTGTATTAATACTATAGAA  
 TCGTTTCCGATAGAAATCACGAGATTCTTTGACCAACCATATGATCAACAATATTGATATCTT 180  
 130 140 150 160 170

LEU SER ASN ILE LYS GLU ASN LYS CYS ASN GLY THR ASP ALA LYS VAL LYS LEU MET LYS  
 TTAAGTAATATCAAGGAAATAAAGTGTAATGGAACAGATGCTAAGGTAAATAATTGATGAAA  
 AATTCATTATAGTTCCCTTTTATTACATTTACCTTGCTACGATTCCCATTTTAACTACTTTT 240  
 190 200 210 220 230

GLN GLU LEU ASP LYS TYR LYS ASN ALA VAL THR GLU LEU GLN LEU MET GLN SER THR  
 CAAGAAATTAGATAAATAAATAAATGCTGTAAACAGAAATTCAGTTGCTCATGCAAGCACACA  
 GTTCTTAATCTATTATATTTTACGACATTGTCTTAAACGTCAACGAGTACGTTTTCGTGT 300  
 250 260 270 280 290

PRO ALA ALA ASN ASN ARG ALA ARG ARG GLU LEU PRO ARG PHE MET ASN TYR THR LEU ASN  
 CCAGCAGCAAACAATCGAGCCAGAGAGAACTACCAAGGTTTATGAATTATACACTCAAC  
 GGTGTCGTTTGTAGCTCGGTCTTCTTGTGATGGTTCCAAATACTTAATATGTGAGTTG 360  
 310 320 330 340 350

**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**



THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

9/39

## FIG.3C.

```

ILE ASN ASP MET PRO ILE THR ASN ASP GLN LYS LYS LEU MET SER ASN ASN VAL GLN ILE
ATCAATGATATGCCCTATAACAATGATCAGAAAAGTTAATGTCCAACAATGTTCAAATA
TAGTTACTATACGGATATTGTTTACTAGTCTTTTTC AATTACAGGTTGTTACAAGTTTAT
790      800      810      820      830      840

VAL ARG GLN GLN SER TYR SER ILE MET SER ILE ILE LYS GLU VAL LEU ALA TYR VAL
GTTAGACAGCAAAAGTTACTCTATCATGTCCATAATAAAAGAGGAAGTCTTAGCATATGTA
CAATCTGTCGTTTCAATGAGATAGTACAGGTATTATTTCCTCC TTCAGAAATCGTATACAT
850      860      870      880      890      900

VAL GLN LEU PRO LEU TYR GLY VAL ILE ASP THR PRO CYS TRP LYS LEU HIS THR SER PRO
GTACAAATTACCACTATATGGTGTGATAGATACACCTTGTGGAATTTACACACATCCCCCT
CATGTTAATGCGTATATACCACTATCTATGTGGAACAACCTTTAATGTGTGTAGGGGA
910      920      930      940      950      960

LEU CYS THR THR ASN THR LYS GLU GLY SER ASN ILE CYS LEU THR ARG THR ASP ARG GLY
CTATGTACAACCAACACAAAAGAGGGTCAACACATCTGTTTAAACAAGAACTGACAGAGGA
GATACATGTTGGTGTGTTTCTTCCCACTGTTGTAGACAAATTGTTCTTGACTGTCTCCT
970      980      990      1000      1010      1020

TRP TYR CYS ASP ASN ALA GLY SER VAL SER PHE PHE PRO GLN ALA GLU THR CYS LYS VAL
TGGTACTGTGACAAATGCAGGATCAGTATCTTCTTCCCAAGCTGAACATGTAAAGTT
ACCATGACACTGTTACGTCCTAGTCATAGAAAGAGGGGTGTCGACTTTGTACATTTCAA
1030      1040      1050      1060      1070      1080

GLN SER ASN ARG VAL PHE CYS ASP THR MET ASN SER LEU THR LEU PRO SER GLU VAL ASN
CAATCGAATCGAGTATTTTGTGACACAATGAACAGTTTAAACATTTACCAAGTGAAGTAAAT
GTTAGCTTAGCTCATAAAACACTGTGTACTTGTCAAAATTGTAATGGTTCACCTTCATTTA
1090      1100      1110      1120      1130      1140

LEU CYS ASN VAL ASP ILE PHE ASN PRO LYS TYR ASP CYS LYS ILE MET THR SER LYS THR
CTCTGCAATGTTGACATATTCAATCCCAATAATGATGTGTAATAATATGACTTCAAAAACA
GAGACGTTACAACCTGTATAAGTTAGGGTTTATATACTAACATTTTAATACTGAAGTTTGTG
1150      1160      1170      1180      1190      1200

```

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)